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UP THE NILE.

F. W. Fairholt, del. et. So.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

STREET IN CAIRO.

UP THE NILE,

AND HOME AGAIN.

A HANDBOOK FOR TRAVELLERS AND A TRAVEL-BOOK FOR THE LIBRARY.

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BY

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With One Hundred Illustrations,

FROM ORIGINAL SKETCHES BY THE AUTHOR.

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LONDON:
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TO THE

LORD LONDESBOROUGH,

This Volume is Dedicated,

BY ITS AUTHOR,

IN PLEASANT AND GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THE VOYAGE WHICH ORIGINATED IT.

PREFACE.

SOME few words may be necessary in explanation of the motives which have induced this addition to the library of Nile literature.

A bronchial affection had rendered it necessary for the Author to seek a warmer winter climate than our own; and Lord Londesborough, with the kind consideration of an old friend, having given him the privilege of being his travelling companion, up a river whose history and associations had always been of paramount interest to him, he started with no other idea than that of re-establishing health, and investigating, for his own instruction, the wondrous remains of early art on the banks of the Nile. During the voyage, sketches and notes accumulated, and appeared at last to assume an interest sufficient to warrant the compilation of this Volume.

Eschewing elaborate details of architectural remains, which have been abundantly described else-

where, the aim of the present volume is chiefly to narrate the aspect of the river, its towns and their inhabitants; and to describe what strikes the eye and mind of a stranger most forcibly on a first visit to "the land of Mizraim." The absorbing interest of the antique remains has hitherto precluded much notice of ordinary life on the Nile. Many picturesque and important towns have never been represented, even in the most elaborate and expensive illustrated books; while the social, geological, and other features of the country have received less notice than usual; to those, therefore, the Author has devoted his chief attention; and the illustrations of the present volume comprise subjects (with very few exceptions) hitherto unengraved.

The traveller will find in Wilkinson and Lane's works, on the ancient and modern Egyptians, all that he will require in elucidation of their manners. They are indispensable companions to the tour. The good practical character of these books, combined with their perfect scholarship, give them the utmost value. It may be well to note here, that the Author has adopted Wilkinson's chronology throughout; because ancient Egyptian dates generally varying (and sometimes to a great extent) according to

the conclusions of different students, some one must be selected as a guide, and none are characterised by sounder sense than Wilkinson.

The Illustrations to this volume have been selected from more than two hundred sketches made on the river and its banks, by the Author, and afterwards engraved by his own hand, with the exception of the woodcuts, which having been drawn upon the wood by him, were very carefully executed by his friend Mr. Henry Rimbault. This is the only assistance, literary or artistic, which the Author has received.

The Nile traveller will do the book and its author good service, by noting any facts that may be added to a future edition. Its great and only aim is to be useful to the voyager—out and home again; and to be truthful to those who consult it exclusively at home.

ANALYTICAL TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE TO ALEXANDRIA.

Arrangements by Steamboat from Southampton.—Bay of Biscay.—Gibraltar.—Malta.—First View of Egypt ... ... *pages* 1—13

CHAPTER II.

ALEXANDRIA TO CAIRO.

Egyptian Donkeys and Donkey-boys.—Shopkeepers' English.—The Old and New Town.—Buying and Selling.—Pipes and Tobacco.—Characteristics of Alexandria.—Picturesque Localities.—Women Porters.—Antiquities.—Cleopatra's Needle.—Pompey's Pillar.—The Arab Town.—Backsheesh.—The Catacombs.—The Mahmoudie Canal.—Railway to Cairo.—Agricultural Statistics of the Delta.—First View of Cairo.—Railway Confusion ... ... 14—40

CHAPTER III.

CAIRO AND THE PYRAMIDS.

Picturesque Character of Cairo.—Old and New Styles.—Descriptions by Sandys and Volney.—Eye Diseases.—The Uzbeekeah.—The Mooskee.—The Bab Zooayleh, and Charms against Diseases.—The

Citadel.—Mosques.—Prejudices Removed.—Bazaars.—Lamps.—Running Footmen.—Dogs.—Shoubra Gardens.—Fostat.—Mediæval Babylon.—The Nilometer.—Ghizeh.—The Pyramids.—The Sphinx ... ... 41—76

CHAPTER IV.

BOULAK TO MINIEH.

The Pasha's Museum, at Boulak.—The Dahabeah, its Crew and General Arrangements.—Dragomen.—The Island of El Rodah.—Pyramids at Abouseer.—Mummied Bulls.—The Sakkara Pyramids.—Site of Memphis.—Mummied Ibis.—Pyramids at Dashour.—Quarries at Masarah.—The Bahr Yussuf.—The False Pyramid.—Aspect of the River.—The Sakia and Shadoof.—Village Houses.—Geological Features.—Monotony of the River.—Traffic Boats.—Shooting on the Nile.—Wild Birds.—Pigeon Villages.—Benisouef.—The Norek.—Nile Fishes.—Evening at Bibbeh.—Fantastic Rocks at Malateah.—Sharouna.—Ancient Quarries.—Peasant and Bedouin.—Village Life.—The Gebel-el-Tayr.—Convent of Sittina and its Mendicant Monks ... ... 77—126

CHAPTER V.

MINIEH TO SIOUT.

A Busy Scene.—Sugar Manufactory.—Victualling the Boat.—Egyptian pictures of Steamers.—The Evil Eye.—Superstitious Credulity.—Ancient Sepulchres.—Charon's Boat.—Fertility of the Land.—Grain Boats and cheating Crews.—Games of the Peasants.—Boat Discipline.—Beni-Hassan and its Wondrous Tombs.—Arab Thieves.—Cave of Diana.—Local Names.—Antinopolis.—Destruction of Ancient Monuments.—Beauty of the River.—The Bahr Yussuf.—Construction of Canals.—The Birds of Sheikh Said.—Tel-el-Amarna.—Gebel Abou-Fayda.—Slave-Boats.—Slavery in Egypt.—The Doum-Palm.—Manfaloot and the Crocodile Caverns.—Reasons for Crocodile Worship ... ... 127—168

CHAPTER VI.

SIOUT TO KENEH.

Beautiful situation of Siout.—Conscription and its consequences.—Trade of Siout.—Pottery.—Tobacco Pipes.—The Bazaar.—John of Lycopolis.—The Ancient Egyptian Hermits.—Boatmen's Songs.—Antæopolis.—Tahta.—Vast flocks of Birds.—Gebel Sheikh Hereede and its fabulous Serpent.—Sculptured Caves.—Foul Winds.—The White Convent.—Ekhmim.—Myriads of Pigeons.—Worship of Pan.—Coptic Christians.—Mensheeh.—Girgeh.—Encroachments of the River.—Ruins of Abydus.—Plan of Ancient Egyptian Temples.—Shepherds of the Plain.—Slings and Slingers, Egyptian and Saxon.—Farming in Egypt, its risks and cares.—The Market at Bellianeh.—Cheap Jewellery.—A Travelling Blacksmith and his forge.—Dancing-girls, and their punishment by the local Governor.—Crocodiles.—Good Shooting.—A "Holy Man," his history and aspect.—Monotony of the River.—Keneh and its trade.—The Governor's House.—Conscription again.—Interview with the Pasha.—The Inn of the Pilgrims to Mecca.—Pottery manufacture at Keneh.—A Busy Bazaar.—A Moolid ... 169—230

CHAPTER VII.

KENEH TO THEBES.

Egyptian English.—"Seeing the Saint."—A Trip to the Holy Fair.—Its Religious and its Secular Scenes.—The *Zikr*.—Dancing-girls.—Arab *Jereed*-play.—Dendera.—Portrait of Cleopatra.—Chambers of Mystery.—Sanctuary on the roof.—Water-Spouts.—Colony of Wasps.—The Sacred Cow, and its worship by modern Sepoys.—The Typhoneum.—Dexterity of the ancient Tentyrites in capturing Crocodiles.—An Egyptian Tumbler.—Ballas and its Water-jars.—A Pottery Raft.—Sunset on the Nile.—Peculiar atmospheric effects.—Ancient Cities.—Negadeh.—The *Malayet*.—Christian Monks.—Pigeon-Towers.—Egyptian dirt and laziness.—Encroachment of the River.—Vast flocks of birds.—Approach

to Thebes.—Luxor and its Consuls.—Dealers in Antiquities.—The Forgers of Gournou.—Tricks on Travellers.—Rain in Egypt. ... ... 231—271

CHAPTER VIII.

ANCIENT THEBES.

Guides for Travellers.—The Libyan Shore.—The Colossi of the Plain,—The Vocal Memnon and the secret of its voice.—Village of Gournou.—Clay Ovens.—The Peasantry and their Houses.—Forged Antiquities.—The Rameseum and its Colossal Statue.—Belzoni and Memnon's head.—Difficulty of its Removal.—Temple of Amun.—Tomb of the Family of Amunoph III.—Vandalism of Dr. Lepsius.—Tombs on the hill sides.—Mummies of Cats.—Sacred Cats.—Witches' Cats.—The Brickmaker's Tomb.—Sepulchres of the Assaseef.—The Biban-el-Malook.—Tombs of the Kings, and their desecration.—Egyptian Theology.—Sacred Animals and Symbols.—The Harper's Tomb.—Belzoni's Tomb—its alabaster Sarcophagus—its mystic Pictures.—Disgraceful desecration by Europeans.—Dr. Lepsius again.—The Mountain-road.—The Plain of Thebes.—The Palace-Temple at Medinet-Abou.—Conventional representation.—An early Greek Church.—Tombs of the Queens.—Karnac.—Recent Excavations, and how effected.—Grandeur and vastness of the Ruins.—Sculptured representation of King Rehoboam.—Guides and Donkey-Boys.—Luxor and its Obelisks.—The Temple and its *bassi-relievi*.—Art made fragmentary ... ... 272—329

CHAPTER IX.

THEBES TO EDFOU.

Farewell to Luxor.—Erment.—Cleopatra's Temple.—Beauty of Ancient Art.—Art in its designed locality.—Crocodilopolis.—Gebel-Ain.—The Crocodile and the Zic-zac.—Esné.—The Great Temple.—The Bazaar.—The Roman Quay.—Effects of the Inundations.—Dancing Girls and Mohamed Ali.—A *Fantasia*.—Style

of Dancing, and lineage of Dancers.—European Manners criticised by Egyptian moralists.—El-Kab and its Tombs.—The Great Temple at Edfou, and its recent exhumation.—Grand character of the building.—Purity of its condition, and appeal for its due protection ... ... 330—359

CHAPTER X.

EDFOU TO ASSOUAN.

The Ruined Town of Booayb.—Gebel Silsilis, its vast Quarries and curious Rock Temples.—The Legend of the chain.—Geology of the cliffs.—Changes in the stream.—Temple at Kom-Ombos.—Dryness of the climate.—Juvenal's description of the Religious Feud between the Ombites and Tentyrites.—Beauty of the River.—Nubian Costume.—Nose-rings.—Ear-rings.—Tattooing.—Walking-staves, Ancient and Modern.—First View of Assouan.—Trade of the Town.—Isle of Elephantine.—Vast heaps of broken Pottery.—Inscribed Tiles.—Arab Traditionary Tale.—Ancient and Modern Aspect of Assouan.—Boatmen of the Cataract.—Boat Charges.—Inscribed Rocks.—Quarries.—Scripture Prophecy fulfilled ... ... 360—392

CHAPTER XI.

ASSOUAN TO PHILÆ AND ABOU-SIMBOUL.

Experiences of Desert Travel.—Ancient Boundary Wall and its legendary history.—Mahatta and the Cataract.—Passage of a boat.—Island of Philæ.—Christian remains.—Disfigurement of buildings by modern inscriptions.—Pharaoh's Bed.—Admiration felt by the Ancient Egyptians for the Island.—Imposition on its Priests, and their protective policy.—Scenery of the River.—Temples at Dabod, Kardassy, and Tafa.—Kalabshe and its inhabitants, their Dress and Costume.—The Tropic entered.—Dandour,

Gyrshe, and Dakke.—The Valley of Lions.—Deir.—The Fortress of Ibreem.—The Rock Temples at Abou-Simboul.—Wady Halfeh, and the Second Cataract ... ... 393—429

CHAPTER XII.

THE NILE IN ITS SACRED AND SANATORY ASPECT.—THE RETURN VOYAGE.

Great interest of Egyptian Studies.—The Nile Deified.—The God, as pictured by Egyptian, Greek, and Roman Artists.—Sanatory properties attributed to the Stream.—Fertility of Egypt.—Analysation of the Soil.—Notes on the Climate of the Valley of the Nile.—Violent changes in its temperature.—Advice to Travellers.—Summary of advantage and disadvantage in Nile Travelling.—Start for Cairo.—The Return Voyage.—Boatmen's speculative traffic.—Old scenes from new points of view.—The Evil Eye avoided.—Routes from Alexandria home. ... ... 430—448

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

PLATE		PAGE
I.—Street in Cairo ...	*Frontispiece, described*	48
The God of the Nile ...	*Vignette on Title, described*	434
Grocer's Shop at Alexandria		20
Catacomb at Alexandria		32
First View of Cairo		38
Charms against Disease		50
II.—Gate of the Khan Khaleel		54
An Egyptian Lamp		54
The Meshal or Cresset		55
The Nilometer		61
The Ring of Cheops		67
Ancient Egyptian Ear-ring		70
Excavations at the Sphinx		73
The Dahabeah		79
Nile Boats leaving Cairo		85
Mode of building Pyramids		88
Mummied Bull		89
Pyramid at Sakkara		91
Mummied Ibis		93
Pyramids of Dashour		95
The False Pyramid at Maydoun		97
The Sakia		99
The Shadoof		101
Ancient Shadoof		102
Geological View at Zaytoun		106
Traffic Boats of the Nile		108
Grain and Straw Boats		109
Ferry Boat		111

PLATE		PAGE
III.	—Pigeon Village near Benisouef	112
	The Norek	113
	Stratification of Rocks at Malateah	116
IV.	—Sharouna	117
	Quarry at Sheikh Hassan	118
	Pigeon-house, Golosaneh	120
V.	—The Convent of Sittina	123
VI.	—Minieh	129
	Egyptian Pictures of Steamboats	130
	Rock-tombs at Beni-Hassan	140
VII.	—Interior of Tomb at Beni-Hassan	145
	Southern Tomb at Beni-Hassan	148
	The Doum Palm	161
	Mummied Crocodile	165
	Water-bottle made at Siout	173
	Tobacco-pipe on Wheels	175
VIII.	—Bazaar, Siout	175
IX.	—Tahta	186
X.	—Ekhmim	193
	Convent near Ekhmim...	197
XI.	—Girgeh	199
XII.	—Abydus	203
	Section of Arch at Abydus	204
	Ground-plan of an Egyptian Temple	205
	Egyptian Sling	208
	Anglo-Saxon Sling	208
	An Egyptian Woman Wearing Jewellery	212
	Ebony Comb	213
	Blacksmith's Bellows	216
XIII.	—Entrance to Bazaar, Keneh	228
	Water-bottles made at Keneh	228
	Portrait of Cleopatra, Dendera	243
	Window in the Temple of Dendera	247
	Water-spout, Dendera	248
	Ancient Egyptian Tumbler	254
	Pottery Raft	256
	Sunset on the Nile	258

PLATE.		PAGE.
	Man Dressed in the Malayat	260
	Ovens in the Plain of Thebes	280
XIV.	—The Rameseum, Thebes	284
	Mummied Cat	292
	Plan of the Harper's Chamber	303
	Bench in Belzoni's Tomb	305
	Basket of Figs	311
	Embattlement at Medinet-Abou	313
	Early Greek Capital at Medinet-Abou	314
XV.	—Great Hall, Karnac	323
	King Rehoboam	324
	The Gebel-Ain	334
	Pilaster of Quay, at Esné	341
	Egyptian Dancing-girl	345
	Dancers' Cymbals	346
XVI.	—Temple at Edfou	353
	Shrine at Edfou	354
	Ruins of Booayb	361
	Exterior of Rock-temple, Silsilis	365
XVII.	—Interior of Rock-temple, Silsilis	366
XVIII.	—Temples at Silsilis	367
	Strata of River-bank, Silsilis	369
	A Nubian Girl	376
	Nose-rings	378
	Ear-rings	379
	Tattooed Hands	380
	Walking Staves	381
XIX.	—Assouan	382
	Group of Pottery	386
	Crosses at Philæ	404
	Christian Arch at Philæ	404
XX.	—The Island of Philæ	408
	Nubian Dagger	415
	Nubian Head-dress	416
	Nubian Ear-ring and Nose-ring	418
	The Deity of the Nile	433

UP THE NILE.

CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE TO ALEXANDRIA.

SOUTHAMPTON—one of the most agreeable of England's seaports—is the locality selected by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company for the departure and return of the important fleet they own, and which connects us with our Indian possessions. As this is the quickest and most direct mode of reaching Egypt, we will conduct the traveller *out* this way; leaving his *return* provided for in a way to be detailed at the close of this volume.

The steamers to Alexandria leave Southampton on the 4th, 12th, 20th, and 27th of every month at one p.m.; except when the above dates fall on a Sunday, in which case they leave at nine a.m. Passengers leaving Southampton on the above dates, arrive at Gibraltar in about five days; and, after staying there from six to twelve hours, proceed to Malta, arriving there in about nine days. The

ordinary stay at the island is about six hours; and the voyage to Alexandria is usually completed in about thirteen days from Southampton. The following are the rates of passage-money:—

To	1st Class. Single Passage.	Children, 3 years and under 10.	2nd Class, and Passengers' Servants.
Gibraltar	£13	£7	£9
Malta	20	10	12
Alexandria	30	15	19

One child under three years of age, if with the parent, free.

Such persons as have an insuperable objection to the long sea voyage across the Bay of Biscay and by Gibraltar to Malta, can pass through France by railway to Marseilles, and there meet the company's steamers for Malta and Alexandria, on the 5th, 12th, 20th, and 28th of the month, at seven a.m. Passengers must be at Marseilles the afternoon of the day previous to sailing. It must be remembered that when the 3rd, 10th, 18th, or 26th of the month falls on a Sunday, the Marseilles portion of the overland mails leaves London on the following day, and the steamers are despatched from Marseilles at seven a.m. on the 6th, 13th, 21st, and 29th of the month. The rates of passage are as follows:—

To	1st Class.	2nd Class, and Passengers' Servants.
Malta	£10	£5
Alexandria	20	10

Children under ten years of age are charged half these rates. One child under three years of age, if with the parent, is free. Passengers booking and paying their passage money at Marseilles must pay the amount in the currency of the place (francs), at the company's advertised rates. This is understood to be for the sea passage only; and includes stewards' fees, table, wines, &c., for first-class passengers. Bedding, linen, and all requisite cabin furniture, are provided in the steamers at the company's expense, together with the attendance of experienced male and female servants. A properly qualified surgeon is on board each vessel, whose services are also rendered gratuitously.

The regulations concerning passengers are these:—Half the amount of passage-money, when the passage exceeds £20, is required to be paid on securing a passage, and the balance a fortnight before embarkation. Passengers not embarking after engaging the passage, to forfeit the deposit of half the amount of passage-money. In case, however, of a passenger being unavoidably prevented from availing himself of a passage at the period for which it is taken, a transfer can be effected to a subsequent steamer, on sufficient notice being given, without forfeiture of any portion of the deposit paid, and accommodation will be allotted as similar as circumstances will permit.

First-class passengers are allowed 336 lbs. *of personal* baggage free of freight, and children (over three and under ten years of age) and servants, 168 lbs. each. A passenger taking a whole cabin is entitled to take in the steamers, free of freight, 4½ cwt.; and a married couple, paying for reserved accommodation, are entitled to take 9 cwt. The charge for conveyance of extra baggage, should there be room in the vessel, is at the rate of 10*s.* per cwt. between Southampton, Gibraltar, Marseilles, Malta, or Alexandria. Baggage can occasionally be had up when absolutely necessary during the passage, by application to the officer in charge. As no trunks or boxes are allowed in the saloon or cabins, but only small portmanteaus or carpet-bags, it is usual to set aside stated days on the voyage when the heavy baggage may be had up from the hold for the convenience of voyagers. Baggage may be insured for the entire journey on very moderate terms, the company having arranged for it with the Marine Life and Casualty Assurance Society, by which the cost of insuring to any of the Mediterranean ports (including stamps) is at the rate of 8*s.* for £50, and so on to £500, for which the cost is £3 17*s.* 6*d.* All baggage must be shipped not later than noon on the day previous to sailing, except carpet-bags or hat-boxes.

Let us now imagine that all the necessary regulations have been complied with, and that our vessel emerges from the dock into Southampton Water. The beauty of that estuary need not be here insisted on; it is well known to all who visit the Isle of Wight, with the intention of landing at Ryde. We pass Calshot Castle, and turn into the Solent, making our way between the island and the Hampshire coast, ultimately passing "the Needle" rocks. As the sun went down on the evening of the 4th of December, 1859, when the author of this volume began the voyage it describes, the scene seemed a realisation of the old Phœnician mariners' tales of the British islands being occasionally shrouded in fogs, which gave them mystic security; baffling the adventurer with a vapoury wall, which he only knew how to penetrate. The day had been wet and cold; the sun set in lurid light breaking through heavy clouds; the receding coast of England appeared gradually to be absorbed in a dull fog; and we seemed to be flying from the thick veil which ultimately closed over it. As we got into the open sea, the sky cleared, the dark clouds gathered like a heavy curtain, which appeared as if slowly lifted from the horizon; and a bright blue sky studded with brilliant stars, a mild breeze, and calm waves, made our first night at sea pleasant.

Shakespeare's duplication of "cabin'd," as "cribbed, confined," gives a true notion of the horrors of a sleeping-berth on board ship. The Peninsular boats are as comfortable as we suppose they can be; but nothing can make pleasant a cabin not larger than a servant's pantry, in which you are packed with three strangers, more or less agreeable, and "compelled" to be on the most intimate terms with, whether you like it or not. In a stifling atmosphere, with a noise of machinery constantly in motion, and sick fellow-lodgers, the vessel, like Macbeth, "doth murder sleep." For those who can bear the sea, the day-life is pleasant enough, and nothing that can add to the passenger's comforts or enjoyment is unthought of in these excellent boats. It is one round of eating, drinking, and pleasant play—a veritable "Castle of Indolence," without Thomson's insubstantiality. A gay trumpet-call summons all to breakfast at nine, where tea and coffee is almost invisible among the numerous dishes which cover the board. A luncheon at one, with wine and ale, interferes, for a short time, with the varied deck amusements. At five p.m. dinner is announced, by the trumpeter gaily playing "The Roast Beef of old England;" and at eight p.m. the cheerful old tune of "Polly, put the Kettle on" announces tea. At nine wine and spirits are provided as "a night-cap;" and by half-past ten all

lights are extinguished. Between the saloon-meals others are provided for second-class passengers and children, whose refreshment-hours are notified with the old tune to the nursery-rhyme of "Boys and Girls come out to play,"—so that the ship resembled Chaucer's description of the rich yeoman's house, and seemed as if it "snowed meat and drink."

After Ushant the Bay of Biscay is crossed, and water only meets the eye until Cape St. Vincent relieves the monotony of the scene. The cape is a bold promontory, with cliffs of great height; the entire coast being wild and precipitous. A square fort is on the edge of the table-land, and is said to have been built by the Moors, as a "look out." Occasional peeps at the Spanish coast now occur until Gibraltar is reached.

It is impossible to exaggerate the grandeur and beauty of the bay of Gibraltar, or to speak with too much enthusiasm of the world-renowned rock. It had been stormy weather when we entered the bay, and the effects produced by partial mists and rain were sometimes very fine. The Spanish city of Algesiras was spanned by a rainbow of the brightest tints; the sea of the lightest hues, pure blue fading into shades of green as it became shallower over the sands; the mists aided sea, earth, and sky, in harmonious blendings, exactly like one of Turner's

pictures when that painter was in his most poetic mood. Close to the landing-place is an excellent market. The town is curious from the crowded mixture of people of many nations, in costumes so various that it gave the scene somewhat the appearance of a masquerade. English, French, and Spanish soldiers and sailors; muleteers crowding the gates; Turks, Greeks, Moors, and Africans, mixed in picturesque confusion. The constant occurrence of English names over shops, and the native names of streets with English translations painted below them, gave an odd effect to the whole. Mules everywhere with pack-saddles, or herds of goats led by boys. Houses piled in picturesque confusion, overtopped by old Moorish or modern fortifications; and, above all, the fantastic forms of the rocky pathways sloping up the mountain, covered in parts with vegetation more or less tropical,—the palm-tree, the more graceful cork-tree, and groves of lemon and orange trees, mixed into dense masses of verdure; brilliant bunches of scarlet flowers lining the road, the product of the *Aloe liliacæ*; scarlet geraniums growing wild like strong bushes, marigolds and jonquils,—combined to make the most beautiful variety of forms and colours. Mounting the rock, the view obtained above Europa Point—embracing the entire bay, the coast of Spain, and the distant promontory

of Ceuta, in Africa—is one of the most glorious panoramas the world can show. The zest with which the three hours' ramble may be enjoyed, while the steamer stays in this bay, is a repayment for the discomforts of that of Biscay.

The voyage soon becomes tedious when Gibraltar is passed, and the coast of Andalusia fades from sight. Now and then a distant island or headland may be seen, such as the high coast of Barbary, or the Isle of Pantaleone. The evening of the third day brings the good ship to Malta, and it comes to an anchor in the quarantine harbour at Valetta. Six hours are generally allowed her for coaling and other necessities in the voyage; and as the vessel is usually anchored about six p.m., the passengers go ashore till midnight. This allows two hours to visit the "sights" of Valetta, or to make purchases in the shops, and wind up at the opera, which commences at eight and is over by eleven. Brief as the time may seem, it is abundant for all this. Landing at the "Nix Mangiare" stairs—so called from the beggars that used to infest them, and declare in those words that they had "nothing to eat"—you see before you the "cursed streets of stairs" denounced by Byron, and that aid you in reaching transverse streets on various levels, or the most important "Strada Reale," at the summit of the

town. The streets are all picturesque, and exhibit Oriental taste in the latticed pavilions, or projecting covered balconies, which are built in front of each. Every house is of dazzling whiteness, and at night the effect is very vivid, as they stand in relief against the deep blue sky. The shops are all good, and the fancy articles with which they abound singularly cheap—gloves and lace particularly so, the latter remarkable for its beauty of design. There is also a large trade carried on in the manufacture of the soft white stone, peculiar to the island, into vases and other ornamental articles, which generally attract from the elaboration of their workmanship and the moderation of their prices: they can be conveniently shipped in return boats, and at low rates. Those who prefer "sights" to "shopping," can compass the whole in a short while; the Church of St. John and the Government House being close to each other, and are all that the town affords, except such as may be examined in strolling where fancy leads. The Church of St. John is well worth a visit; it is ornate to excess, a mass of decoration and colour: the floor, entirely covered with monuments to the memory of the Knights of Malta, with their coat-armour emblazoned in proper tints, is composed of slabs of coloured marbles. The walls and ceiling are resplendent with gilding and ornament; the

tombs of the Masters of the Grand Order are imposing; so is the altar with its abundantly rich fittings. There is a throne on one side for the archbishop, and another opposite for our gracious Lady, who is sovereign of the island. One of the gates of a side chapel is entirely wrought in massive silver, all denoting the wealth once owned by the knights as protectors of the pilgrims to the Holy Land. The palace, now the Government House, contains an armoury, but with very few old or interesting suits: the portions of armour taken from the commander of the Turkish forces during the famous siege; the relics of the heroic Lavalette, and the armour of Vignancourt—the same as Caravaggio painted him wearing; the bull of the Pope granting the island to the brotherhood; are all historic mementoes of the past glories of this place well worthy attention. Ranged around the hall where they are displayed, is a very curious series of majolica vases, drug-pots, &c., many of singularly fanciful forms, all of rarity and value, but not seeming to be cared for or understood by the authorities who have them in charge.

At the opera we were treated to a novelty in the way of puffing the *prima donna*; she had not only an armful of wreaths of artificial flowers for head-dress, cast upon the stage, but some persons from

the upper side boxes showered over the pit a profusion of gilt cards, and upon each was printed a sonnet, full of high-flown compliments to her ability as an actress and singer.

The opera over, "the house adjourned" to the steam-ship; there was scarcely a passenger who had not patronised it, and a perfect fleet of small boats was waiting at the stairs to convey them to the vessel. The effect in the harbour of the light little boats with high stem and stern, something like gondolas, as they flitted over the dark waters with lighted lamps, was very sparkling and pretty; but the quarrelling for fares, and confusion produced by the boatmen, "marred the poetry of the hour."

Three days more of lonely sea, and then the coast of Egypt comes in view: it is flat, marshy, and unpicturesque. It resembles Holland, and is garnished with long lines of windmills, after the Dutch manner. The minarets of the city of Alexandria shoot up from the sandy flat; and as we get nearer it, the double bay, the Pharos, and the high ridge of land upon which stands Pompey's pillar, come in sight. Our vessel anchors in the Port of Eunostus, opposite the Pasha's palace, an extensive but by no means picturesque pile. It is vitiated by an imitation of European taste, and is entirely wanting in true Asiatic character. The harbour has a busy look,

crowded as it is with ships of all nations. Our vessel is now boarded by shoals of dirty, clamorous natives, all eager for employ in porterage. Such passengers as go at once by rail to Cairo, *en route* to the East, get on another steamer, which carries them across the harbour to the railway. Those who are for Alexandria only, paddle across in the "tubs" of boats which are on hire, and so to the Transit Wharf, where conveyances belonging to the hotels are in waiting to receive them. The hotels are all in the Frank quarter at the opposite side of the town; and there travellers may have the luxury of a night's sleep in beds unrocked by billows, which they will be well able to appreciate after the abominable cabin-life of a ship.

CHAPTER II.

ALEXANDRIA TO CAIRO.

ONE of the traveller's earliest native acquaintanceships will, in all probability, be formed with the donkey-boys, who watch the movements of all new comers, and live by the hire of their animals to them. Egypt has always been celebrated for its breed of donkeys, and they are ridden by persons of all classes; they occupy precisely the same position as the horse does among ourselves. They are not the ugly, stupid animals we are accustomed to see, but are more like mules. They are docile and sensible, untiring in their steady pace, and are spread by hundreds all over Egypt, while horses are comparatively rare, indeed they seem to reverse places, and to be as seldom seen as donkeys are in London. The Egyptian animal is of higher value than ours: the ordinary price paid for them is £3 or £4; the better class fetch from £6 to £8; a

fancy value of a very high kind occasionally attaches to extraordinary good animals.

At the wharves, and the doors of the hotels, a perfect mob of donkeys and drivers await the appearance of the travellers. It is the signal for a wild uproar; each vociferates the praises of his animal, giving its cognomen, which has been generally taken from some American or European celebrity, to gratify "fast" travellers, whose whims are studied because they are most easily fleeced. "Ride, master; hawadjee! effendi! Here good donkey; me good boy; you ride!" exclaims one. "He bad boy!—here good donkey; me Hassan, donkey Jack Heenan —you come here!" cries a second. "All bad boy! all bad donkey!—here Jim Crow, him good donkey; here—ride! ride!" bawls number three; and soon they all merge into one chorus of appeal. They hustle each other, they drag the donkeys round you, and in a few minutes you are in the midst of a living mass of animals and their drivers, all struggling and clamouring in wild confusion. You fight your way gradually through, but only to discover the good generalship of the group; for the hindermost have dashed round to the front, and by the time you have reached what was the last persecutor, they have reached him also, and again you are in the centre of a noisy mob. Their persever-

ance is wonderful; they will follow you wherever you go, and it is impossible to shake them off. At last you are convinced that your only chance of peace is to obey the somewhat imperious "Ride, ride!" which is directed at you with savage looks When your choice is made, it is necessary to use caution in getting into the saddle, for the stirrups slip freely beneath it, and it is necessary that they be held firmly on one side while the foot is in the other. In the close-packed mob you cannot be quite sure of really mounting the beast you wish, for as you are about to lift yourself into a seat, you may be seized by an opposition driver, who twists you easily on to his beast, gives a hearty cut behind, and away you go, captured as a prize. If your temper fail, and you use the only appeal to their reason they can feel—the *argumentum baculinum*—it falls powerless, as they have an ingenious mode of bobbing behind their donkeys, and throwing up the poor beast's head to receive the blow. They run beside their animals during the entire journey, and all contrive to pick up a good deal of English, but the misapplication of words is sometimes curious enough, and their droll remarks are often most amusing. As a class, their acquaintance is worth cultivating; they are the only natives who indulge in grotesque, and from whom you can obtain a

laugh. They have much ready wit in getting out of a scrape; should the donkey you ride prove a bad one, and tumble on his knees, in a moment they prevent you from pitching over his head, and, dragging him up again by the bridle, look you solemnly in the face and exclaim—"Ah, good donkey!—him better than horse!"

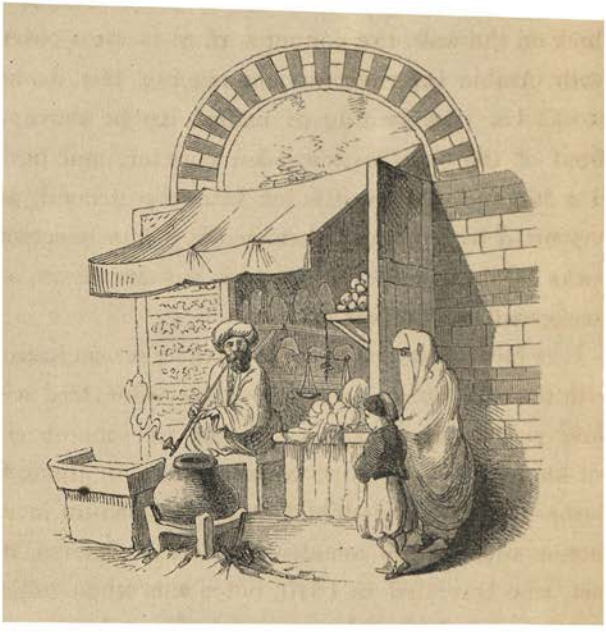
Like all seaports, Alexandria possesses a singular mixture of shopkeepers of all nations; and the English visitor may find considerable amusement in studying his native language as reproduced for his especial attraction here. One has boldly announced INGLISS SPOCKEN at his establishment; another, in his list of condiments, has "sauces and pickles" converted by a native painter, who knew nothing of words or letters, into SANCIS ANP PINKLIS. A hotel-keeper, anxious to protect his patrons from the rapacity of the boatmen, declares he can supply them with such as "can be recommended upon;" while a drinking-shop for sailors, on the quay, is designated over its door, SHOP OF CROC; so that Jack might be debarred of his drink, by imagining it to be a crockery warehouse.

The European quarter in Alexandria is creditable to the taste which constantly improves it; and contrasts favourably with the dirty lethargy which permits the other parts of the city to remain as

they were in the middle ages. Many of the new streets, the great square, with its trees and fountains, and tasteful church, and a few private residences, would do no discredit to an European city; but all this is strictly confined to this district. The native residences are gloomy, and the streets neglected; pavements are unknown, and a deep channel cuts its way through the middle of the road, sometimes to the depth of a couple of feet, its foul drainage festering in the sun. The soil is light, and, consequently, the foot sinks in soft dust when the weather is dry, which is converted into liquid mud after heavy rains; and the rain falls occasionally very heavily at Alexandria, and throughout the Delta. By a journey in the East we may gain some idea of what our own towns were in the middle ages—unpaved, unlighted, and dangerous with ruts and chasms. The streets are generally crammed with people, and lined with busy shops, each shop being a small open room, unconnected with the house by any door or passage; and closed in at night by folding-doors, secured by locks and bolts outside. It is fitted all round with shelves or cases for merchandise, and has a floor raised about two feet from the ground, which projects about the same distance into the roadway, and upon which carpets and cushions are placed

for customers, who seat themselves on this rude divan while they arrange purchases. This is always a lengthy business, and expected to be so by buyer and seller, who quietly give themselves up to a half hour's "haggle" over every trifle. The buyer seated, the seller offers a pipe, and sends to the nearest coffee-house for cups of the hot beverage. Then begins the exaltation of the article to be sold, and an extravagant price named, to be succeeded by as great a depreciation of price and quality on the part of the buyer. Then the subject is dropped, pipes and coffee resumed, to be after a time renewed as before, until something like a fair medium is reached, and the bargain concluded. There is no fixed price for anything; hence you cannot, as in Europe, ask for an article, pay its value, and leave a shop with it in the course of five minutes; it is impossible thus to economise time in the East. The subdivision of trade, too, is another hindrance. If a man wants a turban, he has to go to one dealer for the scarlet skull-cap, fez, or tarboosh; to another for the heavy silk tassel; and to a third for the shawl which he winds about it, and so makes it complete. One man deals in pipe-stems, generally made of jasmine or cherry-stick; a second drills them; a third deals in amber mouth-pieces; a fourth in the red earthen bowls from Siout or

Stamboul; a fifth in leaf-tobacco, which a sixth cuts up for you; and thus half a day may be easily consumed in obtaining what half an hour would secure to you in London. Each trade is distinct, and has its own appointed district, so that



much time is occupied in visiting shops widely asunder. Thus shoemakers are all located in one bazaar, braziers in another, tailors by themselves, and so on, through every business. It was so in Europe during the middle ages, and one can scarcely

help feeling as if thrown back into them when visiting Oriental cities.

The annexed engraving represents the shop of a grocer situated in the outskirts of the town: it is in reality a store-room, in an arched recess, shut in at night by the folding-doors; when they are thrown back on the wall, their inner surface is seen covered with Arabic inscriptions, announcing the dealer's stock, &c. An awning of canvas hangs above; in front of the shop is a wooden counter, and beside it a large oil-jar, partly let into the ground, and supported by a wooden framework. The proprietor tucks his legs under him on his wooden divan, and smokes till a customer comes.

It is impossible to disassociate the Eastern nations with the pipe, it seems so completely identified with their very existence; yet the use of tobacco was not known to them until it had become common to Europe, and the rulers of Turkey opposed its introduction with savage penalties. George Sandys, the poet, who travelled in 1610, notes this when telling us "they delight in tobacco, which they take through reedes that have joyned unto them great heads of wood to containe it. I doubt not but lately taught them, as brought them by the English: and were it not sometimes lookt into (for Morat Bassa not long since commanded a pipe to be thrust through

the nose of a Turke, and so to be led in derision through the citie) no question but it would prove a principall commodity. Nevertheless they will take it in corners; and are so ignorant therein, that that which in England is not saleable, doth passe here amongst them for most excellent." Now, so completely has the pipe become a customary solace, that there is a Persian proverb which declares that "coffee, without tobacco, is meat without salt."

The traveller who visits the East for the first time will do well to rest, after his sea-voyage, at Alexandria for a few days, and not, after the usual English fashion, "push on" for Cairo. By so doing he will have a double enjoyment, for there is enough in Alexandria to interest and amuse one who has not been in an Oriental city before; and it will not "spoil" Cairo; whereas, if Cairo be once seen, he will have no patience for an exploration of Alexandria, which is effectually spoilt thereby. I have been surprised, in turning to the pages of my own note-books, where I have recorded first impressions, at the vivid interest taken on the first view of a place that looks flat enough on a second visit, when better-class scenes have been viewed. There is quite enough to occupy a few days profitably in Alexandria; the entire change in everything that meets the eye, from what it has been accustomed to dwell upon, is an attrac-

tion in itself; the quaint and curious costumes of the people, the queer shops, and the strongly-defined character of the whole place; as well as the busy, crowded bazaars, abound in interest. The long lines of camels that slowly pace the streets, give a novel aspect to them; they are melancholy, half-dried looking animals, of solemn, heavy gait, and pace on through the densest crowds, utterly regardless of the people, who have to look out for themselves, and hasten into the nearest shop to avoid the blows of heavy stones, or piles of wood, which are loosely hung by palm-ropes to their sides, and sway about in a dangerous way, sometimes scratching the walls on both sides of the street. Even in the narrow *sookhs*, or closed bazaars, these beasts are allowed to pass, to the great inconvenience of everybody. Their drivers sit on elevated seats upon their humps, and swing backwards and forwards with an uneasy motion that must be painful to the back, and almost as disagreeable as that of a vessel at sea. The streets are not easy to pass through, in consequence of the number of these animals, and of donkeys, that are constantly cramming themselves in the midst of the dense masses of people. Now and then a carriage dashes into the mob, making it fly in all directions; its approach is announced by a running footman, who calls out to clear the way;

after which, if any accident occurs, there is no redress to be obtained.

The most picturesque parts of the town are, as usual, the most filthy. Every artist has had abundant experience of this fact at home and abroad. Thus some of the nastiest alleys of Alexandria have "bits," that, reproduced in pictures, might make a painter's fortune. Gleams of sunshine, more intense than we northern men ever see at home, dazzle the eye here, almost like the Bude light; and strike across streets of richly-carved houses, lighting up the gaily-coloured dresses of the people, to which the dark houses, and the dirt and dust everywhere, act as an useful foil; tattered cloths, in stripes of prismatic tints, hang across the wider streets to keep off the sun. All this is delightful in pictures, where smells can never be reproduced, nor dust, nor flies, nor other vermin that disgust strangers, and which no care on their parts can prevent them from becoming painfully familiar with. Entomology may be a pleasant study when properly conducted, but as you are forced to study it in Egypt it is simply disgusting.

Owing to the rough way in which the houses are constructed, they have, when new, a half-ruinous look. Some of the older ones have elegant examples of woodwork in the projecting windows, formed by

open lattices of enriched geometric design. The bazaars are generally gay with coloured wares; those of the silk-merchants and the shoe-sellers are the most picturesque; the richly-tinted silks, and the ranges of bright red and yellow slippers, have a very gay effect. The native coffee-shops are dark and dirty (as, indeed, are most others); the jewellers are curious from the style of their designs, as well as the cheap character of the finery, which the poorest women will insist on wearing in profusion. The provision market is well stocked; and here you may occasionally see how hard poor women work as porters. Balancing upon their heads a shallow, broad, wooden bowl, I have seen them loaded with the fore-quarter of an ox, which they carry from the slaughter-houses outside the town to the butcher's quarter in its interior. They will ordinarily carry fifty *oke* (the *oke* being about two and three-quarter pounds English). The male porters are generally supposed to be able to carry about a hundred oke; they move very heavy building stones, by balancing them on their backs, bending forward, and carrying the hands backward as a support for the lower edge of the stone. They generally place a cord over the shoulders, like a sling, to secure boxes, &c.

The antiquities of the town may be soon seen. At one time they must have abounded; now they

are few and fragmentary. In the street on the side of the bay, leading from the great square, in a line with the Belgian ambassador's, are some few fragments of Egyptian and Greek sculpture. In the wall of the Greek convent some antique stones are built up; and fragments of classic capitals may be occasionally seen lying about, or built up in the walls of houses. At the corner of one street at the back of this convent, is a fine but mutilated figure, in red basalt, representing á seated Roman, in an ample toga. It is of colossal proportions, and was originally about nine feet high. The heavy, square chair is interesting in its ornamental details, and so is the costume of the figure generally. It is sculptured in a rigid style of art, as if done by an Egyptian under Roman supervision; but there is nothing to tell of its history. A more interesting sculpture is noticed by Wilkinson as being near this, and representing "a Roman general, in black stone, with a hieroglyphic inscription at the back." But it is not now there, having been sold to a French sculptor, who, as I was informed, had "restored" the features with a *nez retroussé*, and other improvements, and sold it to some collector. Such antiquities are, however, principally, if not entirely, valued by the student only; general visitors to Alexandria may be content with all that is really

worth a "sight-seer's visit," in examining Cleopatra's Needle, Pompey's Pillar, and the Catacombs. The famous *needle* is one of two obelisks, which, in accordance with ancient Egyptian usage, stood before the chief entrance to some public building. They have nothing whatever to do with Cleopatra, whose name has been attached to them without the slightest authority. Wilkinson says that they originally stood at Heliopolis, and were brought from thence by one of the Cæsars, to decorate the gorgeous city of Alexandria. They bear upon them the hieroglyphic names of Thothmes III. (B.C. 1463-1414), Remeses the Great, and Osirei II. (B.C. 1232), therefore they declare their own origin some centuries before Cleopatra existed. Sandys, who travelled here in 1610, calls it "Pharaoh's Needle," so that the name may be still more modern. He also notices "another lying by, and like it, half buried in rubbidge;" a description which shows its long neglect. It is now entirely buried in sand, and its existence can only be detected by looking down a square hole dug for that purpose, when you see a portion of the top of the obelisk, with the crowned hawks sculptured on it. They are both of red granite, from the quarries at Syene, on the extreme bounds of Upper Egypt. The upright one (which is about seventy feet high) is much broken at the base, and supported on irregular

stones, roughly wedged together; it has also been much injured by long exposure to the sea air, which has corroded and destroyed many of the hieroglyphics. Neither of them would be worth the trouble of removal to England; the expense might be better incurred on some antique elsewhere.

Sandys, whom we have just quoted, thus tells his tale of Pompey's Pillar (and of which we may just observe that it has no more real connection with Pompey than "the Needle" has with Cleopatra):—"Without the walls on the south-west side of the citie, on a little hill stands a column all of one stone, set upon a square cube, called by the Arabians, *Hemadeslaeor*, which is, the column of the Arabians. They tell a fable, how that one of the Ptolemies erected the same in the farthest extent of the haven, to defend the citie from naval incursions; having placed a magical glasse of steele on the top, of vertue, if uncovered, to set on fire such ships as sailed by. But, subverted by enemies, the glasse lost that power; who in this place erected the columne. But, by the western Christians, it is called the Pillar of Pompey; and is said to have been reared by Cæsar, as a memorial of his Pompeyan victory." The Arabic name, which Sandys wrote down by ear, is correctly rendered *Amood-e'-Sowari* by Wilkinson, which, he says, is a term that

may be "applied to any lofty monument, which conveys the idea of a *mast*." With the assistance of Mr. Salt, he read the inscription on it as indicative of its erection by Publius, the Prefect of Egypt, in honour of the Emperor Diocletian; and he is of opinion that it may have been erected to record the capture of Alexandria by that emperor, A.D. 296. It stands on a considerable elevation, is 98 feet high; the shaft being in one enormous block of red granite, 73 feet in height, and 29 feet 8 inches in circumference. The Corinthian capital is very rudely sculptured; the pedestal on a foundation of rough stones, some being portions of sculptured Egyptian works; upon one of them Wilkinson has noted the name of Psammiticus (B.C. 664—610); remains of a paved area are about it. Some writers have imagined it was originally placed in the centre of an open court, perhaps the famed Serapeum, which may have occupied the high land here.

There is extant a curious narration of a visit made to this place by a physician of Bagdad named Abdelateef, during the reign of Saladin, when the religious madness of the European crusaders troubled the land. He states that some twenty years before his visit, this pillar stood among many others, which had been removed and broken to make a breakwater in the harbour by the governor of the town. He

adds that he saw the remains of more than four hundred columns of the same material lying on the margin of the sea, and that there was then remaining round the great pillar the shattered remains of others, as well as some entire. The testimony of this well-informed ancient witness is most valuable, and he comes to the conclusion that these were the remains of the portico where Aristotle taught, and the place of Alexander's academy; where once the famed library was located, which gave celebrity to the city.

From this spot one of the best panoramic views of Alexandria is obtained. It embraces the entire town and its bays on one side, and Lake Mareotis on the other. The Mahmoudieh Canal, and the railway-station, are on this side; the cemetery and Arab town on the other. The cemetery is extensive but unpleasant, a dry assemblage of unsheltered graves, covered with tombs of broken plaster or ruined sun-dried brick, in which dogs and other animals burrow obscenely. The Arab town is a conglomerate of mud hovels, mere square cubes, with a door as the only means of egress, light, or air. Fowls and goats wander about them, and dogs watch, on the low roof, the baskets, jars, and earthenware that form the sole property of the inhabitants. Children in filthy rags or totally naked

crawl about in the dust, or mob the passenger for "backsheesh." This is a word of the native language the traveller becomes soonest acquainted with when he lands in Egypt, and it is his destiny to hear it more frequently than any other, and probably to be the last he may hear on leaving: it is bawled after him at all times and in all places, with a continued perseverance, by every one who imagines he has a real claim to the gratuity it demands, or who thinks he may get something by pestering beggary. The demand is rarely accompanied by ordinary civility, and should be stolidly resisted by all travellers. There is no country in the world where this mean mendicancy is so rife, even among men whose position might lead you to suppose they would be insulted by the offer of cash; but "Backsheesh, hawadjee," or "Give me something, merchant!" seems to be generally considered as the proper greeting for a traveller. He is never honoured with the title of "Effendi" or "Sahib," which a very ordinary grade of Egyptian might obtain. The people have no idea of persons travelling except to make money by trade, and have too great a regard for their own class of gentlemen to degrade them by applying their designation to Christians.

The catacombs are very extensive, they principally lie along the western coast, but the cutting for the

railway from the bay intersects many. Nearly opposite the railway-station, the face of the sandy cliffs may be seen hollowed into square sepulchres, as the earth has fallen or been cut away. Midway in the cliff is a door, leading by a flight of steps into a small chapel, which has evidently been used by the early Christians in their sacred rites. The apsidal

end is decorated with distemper pictures of saints, life-size, and within the apse is a conventional representation of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, with Greek descriptive inscriptions. A low stone seat is placed round this recess, the dome having a ribbed shell ornament. There is a double row of elongated recesses in the walls for the reception of the dead;

they were once closed by slabs of stone, upon which their names and funeral inscriptions were placed. Other graves are sunk in the floor, and some steep stairs lead by an arched gallery to lower catacombs.

The journey from Alexandria to Cairo used formerly to occupy three days, and was usually made by boat on the Mahmoudieh Canal. Now the railway does it in six hours. The canal is still used by persons who hire boats at Alexandria and carry much luggage, intending to stay some time on the river. It connects Alexandria with Atfeh, on the Rosetta branch of the Nile; its monotony is perfect; the earth dug in making it is thrown up on each side in high mounds, effectually barring all view of the country; but if it were seen, it would not be much worth looking at, so flat and dull is the prospect, to be equalled only in Holland or on the lower Rhine, the mouth of the latter river being lost in streams over a shallow coast like this of the Nile. The construction of this canal was one of the cruelties perpetrated on his subjects by Mohamed Ali, who "improved" his subjects after the most tyrannic fashion. Having made up his mind to its formation, he obtained forced labour by conscription, each village or town supplying its quota of unpaid labourers. Of these he obtained more than 250,000 men: they had come ill-provided with tools, and

were often compelled to scratch the earth into baskets with their hands only. When food, of which they brought but a small supply, was exhausted, they perished as they worked, and more than 20,000 of these unfortunates died of hunger and fatigue during the few months that this labour lasted. As they died they were thrown up in the earthworks on each side; but the labour went on, and in an incredibly short space of time the canal, forty miles in length, was completed, and named in honour of the Sultan. I could never look upon the ghastly trench without picturing the horrors of its formation.

The railway to Cairo runs on very level land; embankments and a few bridges are all the "construction" requisite. It seems hardly natural to look from the windows of comfortable first-class carriages, rapidly whirling through so primitive a country as we pass through. Its flatness is unbroken, but it is studded with villages and towns, shaded by groups of palm-trees. The soil is most luxuriant, and a large quantity of cotton-plants attest one branch of its trade. The castor-oil plant is also much grown; while lentils and corn—the food of the people—abound.

There are about 3,000,000 of acres capable of cultivation in that part of Lower Egypt popularly

known under the name of the Delta; of course a great part is neglected, as the consequence of poverty and bad government. The ordinary yield of wheat is about 15 bushels to the acre; of barley, 25; of maize, 15; of beans, 10. There is no crop of oats or of hay. Cotton is largely grown, and yields about 200 lbs. to the acre.

The value of live stock may be taken at the following average:—Oxen, from £8 to £10; sheep, from 8*s*. to 10*s*.; camels, from £10 to £15; horses, from £6 to £8; donkeys take the widest range in value, and run from £3 or £4 up to £150, according to quality. The average for a good donkey is about £6; of course, the very high prices are for extraordinary beasts, and are rare instances of value. Lord Henry Scott, who has been a constant winter visitor on the Nile, is currently reported to have given 100 guineas for one very fine animal; but I was assured one Egyptian grandee gave £50 more than that for an extremely good creature of the kind. When we reflect on the absurd way in which Oriental potentates throw away money to gratify their own whims, we may perhaps be inclined to credit what seems a fabulous thing to an Englishman.

The time of transit between Alexandria and Cairo, a distance by rail of 162 miles, is about

six hours (the railway book says five). Passengers and their luggage are conveyed free from the English steamer to the railway, if the journey to Cairo be taken at once without staying at Alexandria, and so the custom-house examination of luggage is avoided, of which first-class passengers are allowed to carry 336 lbs., and second-class 168 lbs., all excess being charged at the rate of 6*s*. per 112 lbs. The carriages are as nearly as possible like the English ones, with the exception of having a double roof, to protect their tops from the extreme heat of the sun; the upper roof is supported above the other by iron pillars, about a foot in height, thus allowing a clear draught of air to pass between them.

Time is well kept now by the trains, but it was not always so. When the railway was first established, the Pasha was in the habit of using the line whenever the idea took his fancy, and so interfering with the regular traffic. He was cured of his whim by a slight reminder of his own danger. One day he felt sleepy, and ordered the train to stop for his nap; it did so, and was run into by another train, which rudely woke his highness, and convinced him of the propriety of sleeping elsewhere.

The railway exhibits none of the characteristic neatness and order of an European one. The prin-

cipal station is a great, rambling, neglected place, with the paper hanging from the walls, and a wretched *café*, badly imitated from the Italian. The first station we stopped at was Damanhour, a very fair specimen of a town in the Delta. It is situated on a gentle rise of sandy ground; the houses mere mud hovels, the mosques built of sun-dried bricks. The refreshment station is midway, at Kafr Zayat, where a branch of the Nile is crossed by a noble bridge. The refreshment room is a kind of wooden barn, and the eatables all of the toughest and coarsest description. The meat was a perfect curiosity of dryness, and the fowls might have been exhumed from a mummy-pit; even the dates were dry and tasteless. I made my dinner of plain boiled rice, a slice of bread and an orange, for which five shillings English was charged. The Englishman may bid farewell to tender and juicy meat after he has set foot in Egypt.

The high road now runs beside the railway all the way to Cairo, and it displays a large amount of traffic; there is a continuous succession of persons carrying goods, or with laden donkeys, or strings of camels, tied one behind the other by ropes, and generally carrying immense bales of cotton. I have counted as many as eighteen camels thus fastened together, and pacing, in their heavy,

melancholy gait, at the rate of three miles an hour. The cotton plant is much cultivated here, and the fields in which it grows look very much like a French vineyard, the height and general characteristic of these plants bearing much resemblance to each other. The pods were bursting with ripe cotton in December when I passed through the fields. The castor-oil plant is also cultivated to a great extent; the whole fostered by artificial irrigation, at which we shall see very many of the labouring classes employed, and fully describe in a future chapter. The Damietta branch of the Nile is

crossed near the town of Bena-el-assal; and afterwards, passing the large town of Kalioub, we see no others till Cairo comes in sight. Twenty miles on this side the city the immense masses of the Pyramids of Ghizeh are visible. As you rapidly approach the city by the direct line of the rail, they increase in grandeur, and the position of Cairo becomes

apparent. A rapid sketch from the window of the railway carriage, which I here reproduce, will give a general idea of this striking approach to the banks of the Nile. To the spectator's left is the Mount Mokattam and the citadel; half way up the hill side is the dome and minarets of the great mosque, built by Mohamed Ali. The minarets of the town, and the town itself, are nearly hidden in the grove of dates and acacias below. The Pyramids of Ghizeh are on the opposite bank of the river; the range of hills beyond part Egypt from the deserts of Africa. The view therefore comprises the entire breadth of the country, the Nile flowing through the low land in the centre.

Arrived at Cairo, the confusion is even worse than at starting. A crowd of ragged fellows wait to seize the luggage, and in their anxiety to obtain it, will scarcely allow passengers egress. Each man seizes a single article, and we found ourselves followed by a long line of attendants, many having but an umbrella in their hands, or a box of cigars balanced on their heads, but all equally expecting "backsheesh." The donkey boys, outside the station, muster in greater number and more persevering style than at the Alexandrian wharf; there were certainly more than a hundred clamouring for custom, and each fighting for preference when we

were there. The noise, dust, and confusion exceeded anything I had ever witnessed before; and it was a positive relief to trot out of the enclosure into the soft, dusty road, and so proceed, in the choking heat, toward the Uzbeekeah, where the principal European hotels are situated.

CHAPTER III.

CAIRO AND THE PYRAMIDS.

ILLUSTRATED volumes might be readily compiled, having the picturesque old city of Cairo for their subject. How then may we, in a few pages, give the reader an idea of its manifold beauties? The life and bustle of its streets, crammed with people in gaily coloured costumes; its shops radiant with silks, or abounding in objects of fanciful form and quaint enrichment unlike anything made in Europe; its ancient houses, a mass of elaborately carved woodwork, showing a wealth of fancy in the old artisans which contrasts wondrously with the poverty of the newer buildings; its mosques, grand in their general design, and a perfect mine of ornamental wealth when studied in detail: these, and the thousand-and-one incidents and combinations of light and shade that enliven its streets, make its

memory like a pleasant dream, rather than a waking reality, of the old Arab city.

In the olden time Oriental exaggeration delighted to picture this great capital, as unrivalled in the world for its extent and magnificence. Modern travellers have long since dispelled the illusion in the western world. The plain prose of fact often clashes dangerously against the freaks of fancy, and sometimes too rudely destroys them. Cairo is not without its annoyances, which the traveller will soon discover for himself. Dust, dogs, and vermin, are to be his familiars while he resides within its walls. Its extent may be limited to a circuit of about seven miles, in breadth it is barely two. It stretches under the Mokattam range of mountain, at about a mile distance from the Nile. Its name of Cairo is an European corruption of a term of honour applied to the city, "El-Kahireh,"—"the victorious;" its proper native name is "Masr," and so it is still generally termed by its native inhabitants. It is the name which the Arabs give to the land of Egypt, and which they have bestowed on its successive capitals or seats of government, whether at Memphis, Fostat, or Cairo. It does not appear to have been applied to the latter place before the conquest of Egypt by the Osmanlee Turks, A.D. 1517. "Since the downfall of the Arab

empire of Baghdad," says Lane, in the preface to his translation of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, "Cairo has been the chief of Arabian cities; its Memlook sultans, introduced into Egypt in their youth, naturally adopted, to a great degree, the manners of its native inhabitants, which the Osmanlee Turks in later days have but little altered. Cairo is the city in which Arabian manners now exist in the most refined state." This, however, was written some years ago, and his nephew, Mr. Poole, says "Mr. Lane saw the last of Cairo in its integrity." Mohamed Ali forced European "reforms" and "improvements" upon his subjects. He gave a death-blow to the picturesque character of the streets when he widened them, and erected ghastly stucco-faced houses on each side the way, as ugly as they are in an English country-town, and still more fragile. The main avenue, known as "the Mooskee," where the European shopkeepers reside, abounds in examples. He curbed the projection of the *Mastabah,* or low divan in front of the shops, where buyer and seller delighted to smoke and drive bargains; and he prohibited the future construction of the picturesque *Meshreebeyah,* or overhanging window, generally a mass of elaborate wood-carving. Architectural art wanted but this governmental interference to give it its death-blow.

The gorgeous and beautiful fancy that flowed so freely over the entire details of the great public buildings of the past, had sunk into bastard imitation of bad French and Italian decoration in the last century, and the distinctive character of the national style had gone for ever. It seems to be a peculiarity of the human mind, concerning which philosophers have as yet propounded no theory—that strikingly distinctive, original, national design is consequent to semi-civilization, or may even exist among barbaric tribes, but never among highly civilized peoples. Thus the decorative styles of the early and middle ages, even the barbaric enrichments of the savage nations, have a peculiarity of their own, excessively easy of identification, while the modern nations at best do no more than copy, combine, or adopt, the styles of all ages and nations who have gone before them. It is impossible to walk through the streets of Cairo without feeling that Oriental art has sunk for ever; a tawdry, debased, make-shift imitation is all that meets the eye, when native art is attempted by the natives; more frequently it is altogether ignored for a still more blundering attempt at European styles.

Cairo appears to have altered little during the last two centuries and a half. About that time Sandys visited and described it as "representing the forme

of a crescent stretching south and north with the adjoyning suburbs five Italian miles, in breadth scarce one and a halfe where it is the broadest. The streets are narrow, and the houses high built; but the private buildings are not worth the mentioning, if compared to the publick, of which the mosques exceede in magnificency, the stones of many being curiously carved without, supported with pillars of marble, adorned with what art can devise and their religion tollerate." He notes the love of exaggeration indulged in by the Cairenes when speaking of them: "Of these in this citie there is reported to be such a number as passes beliefe, so that I list not name it,"—which is to be regretted, as we might then have had a fair idea of this mode of "embellishing" a city. He adds, "The streets are unpaved, and exceedingly dirty after a shower, over which many beames are laid athwart on the tops of the houses, and covered with mats to shelter them from the sunne. Than Cairo no citie can be more populous, nor better served with all sorts of provision."

Volney is less complimentary: he says—"Within the walls the streets are winding and narrow, and as they are not paved, the crowds of men, camels, asses, and dogs, which press against each other raise a very disagreeable dust; individuals often water

their doors, and to this dust succeeds mud and pestiferous exhalations. . . . Its environs are full of hills of dust, formed by the rubbish which is accumulating every day, while the multitude of tanks, and the stench of the common sewers, are alike offensive to the smell and sight."

The prevalence of eye-disease is one of the most remarkable and disagreeable novelties to a stranger; almost every third person among the lower classes has lost an eye, or has them both much diseased. It is a most sickening sight, but it is little cared for by the people. Mothers have been known to blind their children of an eye, to prevent their forced servitude as soldiers in after years. Colonel Vyse (who has immortalised his name by his researches in the Pyramids) says :—"I observed here and at other places that the children's eyes were actually devoured by flies, without any care taken to prevent it; indeed a woman to whom my janissary mentioned it, laughed at the idea of precaution. I afterwards found the Arabs at Ghizeh unaccountably indifferent about their sight." They believe it to be unlucky to endeavour to preserve their eyes, or even to wash them clean. It is a perfectly common thing to see a thick mass of flies surrounding the eyes of a child, and groups of others at the corners of the mouth, nose, and ears. I have seen young men, with

clusters at their eyes, too indifferent to knock them off, and men of mature age take no notice of them. Hence flies in Egypt come in swarms to the face and eyes as to their natural food, spreading disease and exciting disgust; they are a greater pest than any untravelled Englishman can imagine, a never-ceasing worry. Indeed the insect annoyances, generally, are enough to prevent a second visit to Egypt.

The great square called the Uzbeekeah, the first place the stranger will become acquainted with, is surrounded by the English and foreign hotels, planted round with fine old acacias, and laid out as a garden. Its area is low, and it is only protected from inundation, when the Nile rises, by an encircling canal. Sandys describes it in 1610 as "a lake both square and large, where the Moores, rowed up and down in barges shaded with damasks and stuffes of India, accustome to solace themselves in the evening." In the great French work on Egypt, the result of the combined researches of the *savans* who accompanied the army of Napoleon, is a view of the Uzbeekeah under the form of a lake; pleasure-boats cover its surface, with groups of persons in them, where dusty roads and half-green fields may now be seen. The place at present has been converted into a sort of *Champs Elysée* in one part, and a German beer-

garden in another, by the Frank inhabitants of the district, who endeavour to realise as much as possible their own pleasure-places in the only green spot in Cairo. The whole life of the city may be seen here; and there are few processions that do not contrive to pass around it. Professional mountebanks, and persons with trained goats and other animals, serpent charmers, &c., make it their rendezvous. Swings and shows are occasionally on the ground, and the performance of the Egyptian Punch, which is so exceedingly coarse that you would gladly have the entire set of performers well horse-whipped at the conclusion.

The main street leading into the heart of the city, and termed the Mooskee, passes from an angle of this square, and begins at the Frank end with a modern wide roadway between tall European houses, from their summits a covering stretch across it to give shade. In a short time the road narrows to what was its original dimensions, and the crowded street becomes almost impassable. A great main street meets this again at right angles, and, turning to the left, winds round the city towards the railway. This great roadway has not been modernised or "improved;" hence it is most picturesque. Plate I. will give a fair idea of its characteristics. The richly carved woodwork of the houses, with their pic-

turesque overhanging windows, the elegant minarets of the Mosque of Sultan Kalaoon (erected A.D. 1287), diversified with courses of red brick, and the crowd of people in gaily-coloured dresses which fill the streets, complete a scene in which no European element mingles, and which is singularly striking to a stranger.

Passing to the right the road goes through one of the oldest bazaars in Cairo, near one of its most interesting mosques; emerging on a winding way through fine old streets, and by *sibeels* or public fountains, of singularly beautiful enrichment, and so to the southern gate of the city called the Bab Zuweyleh, where we may pause for a few moments to note a singular superstition indulged in by the Cairenes. They believe that a good spirit makes his home behind the heavy iron-bound door which is fastened back to the wall, and that he will aid all faithful votaries. Sick persons may be sometimes seen with their aching foreheads resting on its hinged side, awaiting supernatural aid. The door is covered with metal plates; every crevice between them is hammered full of nails, each driven in by a person suffering from headache, who thus believes he will charm it away. A great number of human teeth are also crammed wherever the fangs can be admitted, which is done for relief in toothache.

Over the upper part of the door small strings are suspended, to which are hung packets, as shown in the cut, consisting of some hair and fragments of the dress of such sick persons as desire aid; they are in the form, and about the size, of a small pear, fastened across by slips of gilt paper. There is a beggar who watches them, and collects alms.

This gate was at one time on the confines of the town which now stretches much beyond it. The long street turning from it to the left at a right angle, called Khoursaryeh, and leading up to the citadel, is well worth exploration. Nothing can be finer than some of the ornamental details of the old houses and mosques, or the picturesque combinations that everywhere meet the eye. Beneath the walls of the citadel the lane turns sharply off into the great square called Roomayleah, and a very striking view is obtained of that part of the city, with the sand hills beyond, and the Pyramids of Ghizeh as a boundary to the prospect. The chief feature in the citadel is the new mosque built by the late viceroy, Mohamed Ali. It is a sumptuous structure of veined alabaster, and its vast dome, when lighted by the rings of lamps suspended beneath, has a

singularly grand effect. The palace near it is a very simple building with nothing to reward a visit. The decorations are all in bad taste, and the pictures of sea-fights, which are on the walls, ludicrous as works of art. From the terrace beside it one of the finest views of the city and surrounding country is obtained, embracing the entire valley of the Nile from the fork of the Delta to Sakkara. The extreme greenness of the irrigated land contrasts most forcibly with the glaring sands that bound it, and the lime-stone mountains forming the Libyan range. The long line of pyramids from Ghizeh to Sakkara is a striking adjunct to the whole.

The Mosque of Sultan Tayloon, in the square below, is the most ancient in Cairo; it was built A.D. 879, and, says Wilkinson, "if not remarkable for beauty, is a monument of the highest interest in architecture, as it proves the existence of the pointed arch about three hundred years before its introduction into England, where that style of building was not in common use until the beginning of 1200, and was scarcely known before the year 1170." Near it is the far-famed Mosque of Sultan Hassan, a noble old work now in a state of lamentable neglect. It was constructed from the outer casing-stones of the Great Pyramid of Ghizeh in the early part of the fourteenth century, and abounds with

the most enriched details of ornament within and without, not the least remarkable of its fittings being the rows of coloured glass lamps hanging from its walls, of Syrian manufacture, bearing the sultan's name amid glowing coloured decoration: they are some of the finest early glass-work of their kind; but many are broken, and others hanging unsafely from half-corroded chains. Yet this mosque has always been the boast of Cairo, and popular belief led to the acceptance of the legend, that the sultan cut off the hand of the architect, that he might never be enabled to build its rival. It was considered so sacred that a Christian was not allowed to pass before it in the olden time; now there is no difficulty in seeing the interior of any in Cairo. Frankish gold has overridden religious prejudice; and the greediness with which the custodians look for their gratuities sometimes exceeds the bounds of decency; thus, my guide, on my visit to the Mosque of Mohamed Ali, was severely beaten by the door-keepers, because I had not given what they thought enough.

Times are greatly altered since Belzoni's days, when it was dangerous for an European to walk in the streets. Upon his first visit, in 1815, on passing a soldier, he received a blow from him, which cut off a piece of the flesh of his leg, and

disabled him for thirty days. He was coolly told by Mohamed Ali, "Such accidents could not be avoided where there were troops." On another occasion he was robbed by soldiers in the Uzbeekeah; and narrowly escaped being shot afterwards for unintentionally stopping the way in a crowded street. The mosques were quite closed against men of other faiths; now "infidels" are allowed to enter them—an act that would have made a horrible impression fifty years ago; but which the greed for *backsheesh* has made more than tolerable. It is amusing to see Oriental apathy change to wolfish avidity when the infidel desires to enter their holy places, and the sleepy custodians wake up to the pleasant jingle of piastres.

We owe our safety in travel, here and on the river, to the vigour of the late Pasha, and the gradual encroachments he made on native prejudices. Formerly, persons were insulted or ill-treated in journeying; but now the orders from sultan and viceroy are so strict, that travelling is perfectly safe, unless native prejudices be wantonly aroused.

The different traders in Cairo have each their proper quarter of the city apportioned to them; I therefore need not caution the stranger to avoid that of the braziers: the din is insufferable. The Jews' quarter is offensive in another way. Here,

in the midst of narrow alleys, where two persons can scarcely pass, live "the chosen people," in dirt and squalor, busily working on the gold and silver they have always loved almost beyond their own souls. The bazaars are, in general, most amusing, from the abundance of wares exhibited, and the gay aspect of the scene. One of the best is termed the Khan Khaleel; its picturesque entry is shown in Plate II. It was completed at the commencement of the fourteenth century, and bears traces of its fine original character. The arch of entrance is closed at night by a wooden gate: the chain is dropped, and the second, which appears in the central ring, passed across the door. In this way many of the streets are closed.

The effect of Cairo at night is singularly gloomy. There are no public lights; and a large shop or coffee-house may be lit by a single oil-lamp, consisting of a hanging glass, in which floats a single cotton wick, lighted as if only designed to make "darkness visible." On a level with the rim of the glass is a pyramidal wooden cover, perforated with a few air-holes. Sometimes one such lamp is hung in the centre of a bazaar, diffusing as much illumination as an ordinary European night-light in a sick room. All persons are obliged

F. W. Fairholt, del et Sc.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

GATE OF THE KHAN KHALEEL.

by law to carry lights with them if they walk out after dark, and are liable to detention as suspicious characters should they be caught infringing it. Carriages are accompanied by running footmen, who bear an open fire-pot, filled with resinous wood, at the top of a pole; the pointed end is stuck in the ground while they wait for their masters outside the door; the staff is thrown across the shoulder as they fly beside the carriage. It is called a *Meshal,* and in its nature is identical with the *cresset,* which in former times was carried by the marching watch of London, and alluded to by Shakespeare under that name in the speech he gives to Owen Glendower (*Henry IV.* Part I., Act iii. Sc. 1):—

> "At my nativity,
> The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
> Of burning cressets."

Later at night, when man has deserted the streets, the dogs have the town to themselves. It is curious, in the stillness of the night, to listen to their uproar,—the barking and howling of the nearest commingling with the universal noise that spreads over the entire city, occasionally heightened

by a fiercer fray. They have parcelled the town into districts, where each dog ranges from birth to death, and woe to him if he oversteps the boundary; all the others set upon him, and will worry him to death if he cannot fly within his own precinct, where none will dare to follow him. I saw one dog brought by a servant into a new quarter, and which he had the utmost difficulty in saving from the fury of the legitimate inhabitants. The street-dogs are generally poor, diseased, half-starved brutes, exciting commiseration rather than fear. They usually shun the native Egyptian, who believes himself contaminated by their touch. They know the European by his dress, and will bark and snarl occasionally, to the delight of "the true believer;" but generally avoid mankind, or follow at a respectful distance on the chance of charity, sometimes mercifully awarded them. I have seen persons buy bread to break up and cast among them. Children and young persons wantonly ill-treat them, occasionally amusing themselves by kicking them almost into insensibility.

A pleasant hour may be spent in an excursion to Shoubra, a palace of the Pasha's about three miles from Cairo, but connected therewith by an avenue shaded with magnificent sycamore and acacia trees, that interlace their branches over the wide

road, forming a green bower the whole way. To the left the Nile is seen, and to the right the fertile fields over which the railway passes. The gardens were laid out by an English gardener, and are very picturesque; the fountains and kiosks are, however, more remarkable than the flowers or trees. From an eminence, surmounted by a pretty pavilion, a fine view of the country is obtained. The whole thing, including this noble avenue, is the work of the late Mohamed Ali, and the trees are little more than forty years old. Belzoni first visited Egypt to construct an hydraulic machine for the Pasha at this place, and its failure induced him to turn his attention to those antiquarian researches which have made him famous.

About three miles to the south of Cairo is Fostat, or Old Cairo, a town which takes precedence in point of antiquity. Here is still to be seen the strong Roman-built walls of the station known as Egyptian Babylon, first founded by a colony of captives taken by Sesostris, according to Diodorus; but which Wilkinson inclines to imagine a free settlement of Babylonians at a later era. Strabo notes it as one of the three places where the Roman legions then forming the Egyptian garrison were quartered. It is a place still of great interest, inasmuch as it is probably unique as an example of an isolated town,

still enclosed with its Roman walls, and crowded with densely packed streets. It gives a perfect idea of what such places were in our own country and elsewhere, as regards their general arrangement. The walls are built of small squared stones, with bonding courses of red tile, in the style so invariably adopted by the Romans, and are nearly ten feet in thickness: half-round towers project boldly from them at different places, and two of great size flank the principal gate on the south side. This gate, now buried to the crown of the arch, must have had a most imposing effect in its pristine state; it has been much injured: at one end of the triangular pediment, above, is an eagle in relief. The only entrance to the town at present is by a small postern-gate at the side, not large enough to admit any carriage, but only a rider: the lanes within are narrow and tortuous, little more than seven feet wide; the houses very high, many with "chambers on the wall," as in the days of the Apostles. It is now inhabited by a Coptic community, and very many other Christians. The Greek convent in the centre is constructed over an ancient vault, traditionally reported to have been the chamber of the Virgin Mary when she sojourned in Egypt. It is certainly very old, and may be of late Roman work; but we shall find these traditions so varied that it wants

large faith, or credulity, to depend on any. At some short distance from Cairo they show the tree under which the Holy Family rested; yet at Siout, two hundred and seventy-four miles higher up the river, they claim to have afforded shelter to them during their stay in the land. In fact, from the days of the Empress Helena (who was particularly lucky in discovering everything she wanted), there has been no lack of localities or relics to gratify believers in them.

In the year 1250, the crusaders under the sainted King Louis of France, besieged Babylon without success. The Sieur de Joinville, who has left a most interesting account of his own career with the army, describes the terror which assailed them when the famed "Greek fire" was cast towards the besiegers, from the walls of the town. It is the Babylon of mediæval romance; and the rich cloth formed of gold and silver threads and silk, termed *baudekyn*, or "cloth of Baldeck," was made here. It was enriched with figures of trees, birds, and flowers, in true Eastern style, and highly valued as material for the dresses of royal and noble personages.

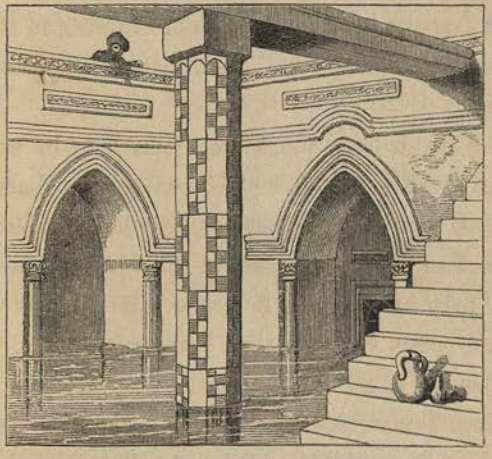
The sultan of Babylon, who plays so conspicuous a part in the old romances, was in 1422 the chief of the Memlooks, and resident in the citadel of Cairo. In the Bodleian library, at Oxford, is a very curious

manuscript survey of Egypt and Syria, made by Sir Gilbert de Lannoy, in 1422, who was sent by our Henry V. to ascertain the state of that country, with a view to a crusade. He says, "throughout the country of Egypt, Syria, and Sayette, there is usually but one lord, a sultan of Babilon, who has the supreme command." The last of these Memlook sultans was Touman Bey, who was hung at the Great Gate called Bab Zuweyleh, at Cairo, in 1517, by Sultan Selim, who then made conquest of Egypt.

Babylon is now much encroached on by sand: on the south it has hidden the wall at least fourteen feet; on the north, it forms a high hill, completely overlooking and commanding the town. In the early part of the seventh century it was besieged by the conqueror of Egypt, the Arab Ameer, who was before it for seven months, and after its fall founded Fostat and New Cairo. The mosque at Fostat, just outside the Roman wall, which bears his name, is an early work, but not of his era: it presents some curious examples of early pointed arches. Fostat may be described as a line of streets and garden-houses between the old fortress and the river. At the end of the Island of Rhoda, is the ferry to Ghizeh, and the ancient Nilometer, used for so many centuries to perform

the important office of ascertaining the daily rise of the river during the inundation.

The Nilometer may be described as an open, square, well-like chamber of stone, which, at one time, was covered by a dome. It has a Cufic inscription round the upper part, and arched recesses below. The researches of Wilkinson failed



to discover a date on any part; the "inscription" he says, "is not without its interest for architectural inquiry, though devoid of a date, since the style of the Cufic is evidently of an early period, corresponding to that used at the time of its reputed erection—the middle of the ninth century—and as the arches are all pointed, we have here another

proof of the early use of that form of arch in Saracenic buildings." In the centre is a pillar divided into cubits and digits, a staircase on one side leading to the water which covers a deposit of about six feet of mud. When David Roberts visited this place, but a few years since, he was obliged to watch an opportunity, leap the low wall, and hurriedly complete his sketch of the interior, "at the risk of being drowned in the well of the Nilometer, or shot by the sentinel," says the writer of the descriptive letter-press accompanying the views made for his great work on Egypt and the Holy Land. At that time the large building beside it was used as a powder-magazine, and all access denied to strangers. The view I engrave was done without any difficulty; I was admitted at once, and allowed to draw what I pleased. The number of English travellers now, and the stringent rules for their protection issued from the government, combined with the certainty of "backsheesh" for civilities rendered, has altered the whole Nile district from Cairo to Assouan.

In crossing the river, the picturesque houses of Ghizeh are seen upon the high mud-bank opposite. Ghizeh is celebrated for its egg-hatching by artificial means, which Wilkinson says "has been continued from the time of the Pharaohs to the present day."

As this process is well known in London, and has been made the subject of public exhibition there, the visitor will now scarcely lose time at this "sight," but proceed across the plain to the Pyramids, that stand in unobstructed view before him as soon as he leaves the town. The stranger will now have his first experience of the deceptive character of distances in Egypt. The air is so pure, and the plain so level, that they do not appear two miles off, but the distance is more than five, though that is partly occasioned by a deviating road, rendered still longer when the waters are out, and the dykes filled, that you now ride into and out of dryshod: it then makes the journey one of ten miles. The plain is wondrously fertile, and is said to be as productive as the land in volcanic districts. When I passed through it in April the corn was ripening, and the beans fit for gathering, as with us in July. Flocks and herds were grazing in large quantities, watched by shepherds, who with their families inhabited the low broad-spread Arab tent, or lived within a sort of open screen of bamboo stems, just sufficient to shelter them from the wind. All ceased work, or aroused their native indolence, to run across fields and intercept the stranger with a request for "backsheesh," sometimes assuming a sort of threatened demand, which all strangers

cannot too soon learn to steadfastly oppose wherever they go, except to legitimate guides.

Certainly the popular idea is that the Pyramids are built on the plain of the Nile; they in reality are based on a plateau of rock, one hundred and fifty feet in height, a lower stratum of the great Libyan range behind them. Colonel Howard Vyse, whose researches here have done so much for science, observes:—"The whole plain to the foot of the mountains, from Sakkara to Abou Reche, seems to have been formerly under cultivation, but either from neglect of the ancient canals, or from other causes, it is now covered with about nine feet of sand. The whole desert has evidently encroached upon the valley of Egypt, particularly from the westward, and there was probably little or no sand on the mountains at Ghizeh, nor upon the plain beneath, when the Pyramids were erected."

The Pyramid of Cheops, the most northern of the group, is that usually ascended by travellers. It has been denuded of the triangular casing stones, so that its exterior presents a vast series of broken steps. They are about four feet high, and up these the visitor must clamber who would reach the summit, and obtain a view very little better than that from the plain, and totally inferior to one seen from the citadel at Cairo. Should he require

it, or should he not have sufficient determination to resist it, he may obtain the assistance of the crowds of Arabs who infest the place; but let him remember, that if he once gives himself to their guidance, he must be content to be placed, *nolens volens*, upon the top. While some drag at the arms in front, others push up behind, and lift the legs to successive stones. Kicking, struggling, or irate words are utterly useless, up you are sure to go; and should any rings be worn on the hands, you are likely to miss them when you reach the summit, as they have an ingenious knack in withdrawing them during the confusion; for all is accompanied by a clamour and excitement unknown in the "cold north."

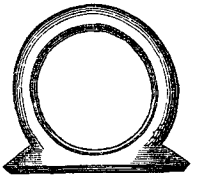
"The manner in which these immense buildings were constructed, and the means by which the vast blocks of almost impenetrable stone were worked and placed at different heights with critical exactness, are even now unknown. For instance, the blocks of granite composing the floor of the king's chamber in the Great Pyramid of Ghizeh, are laid with such precision that not only are the joints scarcely perceptible, but the under faces and edges of the stones are so sharp and polished that it is impossible to detect how they were lifted, and placed in contact with each other, as no marks of force or of any

purchase having been applied can be perceived, so that some persons imagine that it was not until after they had been fixed in their respective places that the outward surface of the stones was smoothed down and finished. The blocks placed perpendicularly to the incline in the several passages have also the finest joints, and scarcely any settlings or imperfections appear. The masonry in the king's chamber, the casing-stones, and those in the foundation and at the base are, perhaps, unrivalled."—(Col. Vyse.)

The chambers of the interior are reached through long, low, narrow passages, leading from the entrance —a dismal aperture, about three feet high. Down this stifling shaft the visitor is crammed, with Arabs, who effectually stop the little air that might follow him, and are sometimes clamorous for gratuities when inside, and impede his exit. There is scarcely anything to repay an ordinary visitor for the fatigue and discomfort of the exploration. The name of Cheops, or Suphis, has been painted upon some of the stones before they were built into the walls by the masons. The date of 2,450 years before Christ has been named by Egyptian scholars as the period of his reign. In looking upon the Pyramids, we look upon antiquities the most profound the world can show: they were ancient to the nations we consider the most ancient. Joseph, Moses, and other

characters of the Bible, must, when living, have looked upon them; Herodotus, the father of history, contemplated them as works of a long-forgotten race.

The late Dr. Henry Abbott, of Cairo, whose fine collection of antiquities principally came from the district of the Pyramids (and is now in the New York Historical Museum), had a remarkable signet-ring, of which the accompanying engraving is a representation. It bore, among other hieroglyphics, the name of Cheops. The impression,



of the exact size of the original, is given beneath the ring. The style of the hieroglyphics is in perfect accordance with those in the tombs about the Great Pyramid, and those within the oval comprise the name of the Pharaoh of whom this pyramid was the tomb. The details are minutely accurate, and beautifully executed. The ring is of the finest gold, weighing nearly three sovereigns. This remarkable antique is said to have been found at Ghizeh, in a tomb near that excavation of Colonel Vyse, called "Campbell's Tomb," in compliment to Colonel Campbell, the British consul-general at the time when Vyse was busied at the place.

Above the entrance to the Great Pyramid the visitor will note upon one of the two large stones—which rest against each other, thus, Λ and form a sort of pediment—a square tablet, closely packed with eleven lines of hieroglyphics. He will find no representation of this in any published view, and may be surprised to hear it is a modern fabrication. To thus vitiate one of the most venerable monuments in the world, by the construction of a foolish record, is deserving of the utmost condemnation. Its "grand no-meaning" and true character may be best detailed in the words of Lord Nugent:—"In one corner of this pediment, Professor Lepsius has, if it may be allowed to say so of so learned and able a man, with a somewhat questionable taste, carved out a tablet, and adorned it with a long, and doubtless very correct, hieroglyphic inscription, in honour of his sovereign, King William of Prussia, and of Victoria, Queen of England—strikingly inappropriate in that place—an anachronism both in character and composition—illegible to the great mass of mankind—and, to the few learned who can read it, a counterfeit, proclaiming itself to be such—a line added to the Iliad in commemoration of Waterloo:" in short, a mischievous absurdity.

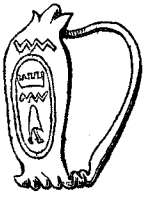
In these days of quick and easy travelling, we

can scarcely appreciate the difficulties which beset the men who, even at the commencement of our century, exerted themselves in penetrating the secret of the Pyramids. Chief among them was Belzoni; and it is to his acumen and indomitable perseverance that we owe the means of entering the second pyramid, supposed, from the names found on its stones, to have been constructed by Shafre or Cephres, who lived, and probably shared the throne, with Cheops. The apex of this pyramid is interesting, from the circumstance of the casing stones remaining: they still retain a polish on their surface, and speak of the simple beauty which must have been the characteristic of these solemnly-grand old monuments in their pristine condition.

Persons are occasionally found foolish enough to ascend this pyramid, a feat both difficult and dangerous, as the casing-stones of the upper part project considerably; and in descending appear to overshoot the base, that cannot be detected by the eye, as the legs are moved about in search of a foothold in the rough stone below, and nothing seen but the sands far beneath. A party of young officers, *en route* for India, had ascended a short while before I visited the place, the Arabs having joined and aided them. Some of the natives are willing to

make the ascent, but only on exorbitant terms. They obtained nearly ten pounds on this occasion: so that the adventure literally belongs only to those who have "more money than wit."

The third pyramid, not more than half the size of the others, was by the ancients considered the most elegant, inasmuch as it was cased with polished Syenite granite, the rest being only constructed of blocks from the limestone quarries at Masarah, on the Arabian side of the river. The ancients spoke of this as the mausoleum of Menes, or Mycerinus, and when it was opened by Colonel Vyse, a wooden coffin was found in a sarcophagus having that name upon it. The sarcophagus was sent to England by sea, but wrecked on the way. The fragments of this coffin, and portions of a body found in the passage to the funeral chamber, and supposed to be that of the king, now form a ghastly group of fragments in our British Museum.



Dr. Abbott, in the collection we have alluded to, had a curious necklace and ear-rings of gold, marked with the hieroglyphic name of this king. One of the ear-rings is here engraved. They were found in a jar at Dendera, but as the Egyptian princes traced their descent from him, and he was the fabu-

lous founder of the monarchy, they may have been memorial works of a much later period, unless, indeed, as Sharpe in his "Chronology" observes, on the authority of Manetho, the name is that of Mychera or Nitocris, whom the old historian expressly says built this pyramid, and governed Memphis as the widow of Thothmes II., about 1460 years before Christ. This would make a difference of more than a thousand years in the age of the building, and probably its smaller size and superior finish may warrant the assumption of its being the least ancient of the three. It must be borne in mind that early Egyptian chronology is by no means fixed, nor the hieroglyphic inscriptions so determinedly clear as *savans* make them appear on paper: there is a vast deal of clever guessing in all, which the uninitiated are expected to take as oracular.

Around the great pyramids are many smaller pyramidal tombs, in a greater or less state of dilapidation. Immediately in front of that of Cheops, are three much smaller, the central one, according to Herodotus, being that of his daughter. In the rocky ground are dug the tombs of many unknown persons; they are generally deep pits. The largest and most remarkable is that called "Campbell's Tomb," immediately behind the Sphinx. Approaching its edge, you look down into a deep well, or

rather a large square pit, more than fifty feet in depth, and twenty-six feet across the opening, and see the ponderous sarcophagus of black basalt, still remaining in its original position. Near it is another tomb of equally grand proportion, with walls of polished granite and alabaster, recently opened by M. Mariette. To the west is one particularly interesting tomb, its walls covered with delicate sculptures, still freshly coloured, and delineating those scenes in the public and domestic lives of the old Egyptians which have made them such valuable exponents of long-past and unrecorded manners. It bears the same royal name as is found in the Great Pyramid, and is supposed to be that of some officer of the court. Others belonged to priests and private individuals. A long day will quickly pass, and may be well spent, in examining the relics upon this square mile of desert sand.

The Sphinx is a monument so unique in the world, that it may be reserved as the crowning glory of the day. Its solemn, upturned face, though so rudely injured by the savage hand of man, still looks in calm majesty toward the rising sun. The features are Nubian, and the traces of the brown-red colour which once covered them still remain. The excavations show that this was originally a colossal figure of a sedent human-headed lion, wear-

ing a royal crown with the sacred asp in front. Fragments of a plaited beard were found in the sands below it, which does away with its once conceived feminine character. It is entirely cut from the solid rock, except in a few places where that was defective;

the cap and the fore legs have, therefore, been added in hewn stone. Mr. Salt and Signor Caviglia excavated the upper portion and the entire front of the figure; and Colonel Howard Vyse continued the labour, which satisfactorily proved that the Sphinx

had a sacred character, a Greek inscription upon one of its paws alluding to it as the guardian of the country and its king; it is signed "Arrianos," and thus restored and translated by Dr. Young:—

"Thy form stupendous here the gods have placed,
Sparing each spot of harvest-bearing land;
And with this mighty work of art have graced
A rocky isle encumbered once with sand;
And near the Pyramids have bid thee stand:
Not that fierce Sphinx that Thebes erewhile laid waste,
But great Latona's servant, mild and bland;
Watching that prince beloved, who fills the throne
Of Egypt's plains, and calls the Nile his own.
That heavenly monarch (who his foes defies),
Like Vulcan powerful (and like Pallas wise).

Between its paws the Sphinx originally supported a kind of small temple or sanctuary: the walls consisted of three sculptured tablets; the central one, of granite, which rested against the breast, depicted Thothmes IV. (B.C. 1410) making an offering to the Sphinx; the side ones, of limestone, were sculptured with similar representations, the king being Rameses the Great (B.C. 1311). An enclosure was in front of this temple, bounded by a low wall, crossing from each paw, and including an extent of fifty feet between it and the inner wall of the sanctuary, with a sacrificial altar in front of the step leading into it, as shown in the engraving.

In front of all this was a wide paved area, from which two grand flights of stairs ascended, leading to a paved roadway, between crude brick walls, which protected it from the desert sand, and led toward the plain. Nothing could be grander than the conception and execution of this approach to the Sphinx, by a broad excavated way, that brought the visitor to a level with the breast of the figure, and gave him a full view of the altar and temple below. As he descended the gigantic creature would appear to rise in its immensity, until he was on a level with its foot. The sand drifts so fast from the desert now, that the space once excavated is again entirely filled; the outline of the back can only be seen, but the solemn grandeur of the "Father of terror," as the Arabs call it, is not effaceable. Thousands of years have rolled over that awful head, and nothing short of the world's destruction can fairly destroy it; it is the most solemn monument the world has to show. But what I would say has been better expressed in the following eloquent words of the author of "Eöthen:"—"Laugh and mock as you will at the worship of stone idols, but mark ye this, ye breakers of images, that in one regard the stone idol bears awful semblance of Deity—unchangefulness in the midst of change—the same seeming will and intent

for ever and ever inexorable! Upon ancient dynasties of Ethiopian and Egyptian kings—upon Greek and Roman, upon Arab and Ottoman conquerors—upon Napoleon dreaming of an eastern empire—upon battle and pestilence—upon the ceaseless misery of the Egyptian race—upon keen-eyed travellers—Herodotus yesterday and Warburton to-day—upon all and more this unworldly Sphinx has watched, and watched like a Providence with the same earnest eyes, and the same sad, tranquil mien. And we, we shall die, and Islam will wither away, and the Englishman, straining far to hold his loved India, will plant a firm foot on the banks of the Nile, and sit in the seats of the faithful, and still that sleepless rock will lie watching and watching the works of the new, busy race, with those same sad, earnest eyes, and the same tranquil mien everlasting. *You dare not mock at the Sphinx.*"

CHAPTER IV.

BOULAK TO MINIEH.

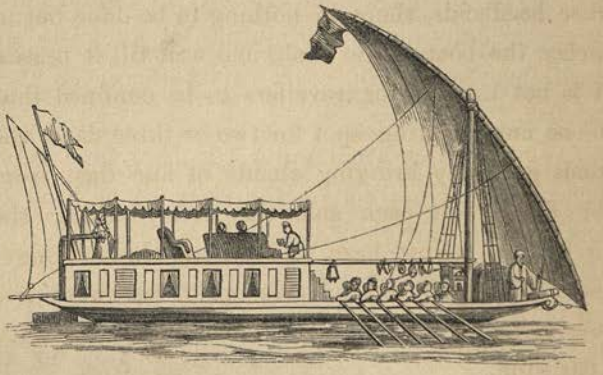
Boulak is the port of Cairo, distant about a mile from that city, and presenting the usual aspect of a waterside town. There is a busy line of boat builders constantly occupied on its bank; it abounds with warehouses and granaries; its streets and houses are generally picturesque, but dirty and old. The one important feature to a stranger, is the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities, recently founded by the Pasha, in a commodious house overlooking the Nile. It has been placed under the curatorship of M. Mariette, who first visited Egypt in the service of the Louvre. The largest portion of the collection was purchased at once from M. Huber, the late Consul-General for Austria, who had been long engaged in forming it, with a fastidious taste that admitted into the series none

but fine examples. It is, consequently, a remarkably excellent introduction to the arts practised by the ancient Egyptians; and to the future studies of such as ascend the river to become familiar with the astounding works of that great people. It may suffice to say, that nothing, from a scarabeus to a granite sarcophagus, is wanting, to carry the student through the various phases fine art assumed three thousand years ago. The great feature of the collection is the recent addition of gold ornaments discovered by accident at Gournou (Thebes), by some boys, in ground unmarked by any tomb; the fine mummies upon which they were placed passed into the hands of the Pasha of Keneh, who was induced to part with them to the Viceroy's museum. They were unwrapped, and more than thirty-five pounds' weight of gold ornaments found upon them. The series of necklaces, with figures of jackals in gold, and the golden bracelets, enriched by enamel colours, are extraordinary works of art, as well as of great intrinsic value: one of them is very remarkable, having the sacred hawk for its central ornament, holding the emblem of eternal life; its surface is brilliantly coloured in *cloissonné* enamels. A hatchet of gold, with a hunting scene embossed on the blade; a mirror, with a heavy lotus-shaped handle of gold; and a

large variety of minor decorations for the person, crowd this unrivalled case of antiquities. Two small models of funeral boats, with the rowers, all formed of silver, are even more precious in the eyes of the Egyptian student, from their extreme rarity. The room is appropriately decorated, after the style of the tombs at Beni Hassan, and the whole arrangement honourable to the Viceroy and his curator; as he is still prosecuting new researches, and has prohibited wanton mischief to monuments, or the exportation of antiquities, it promises an useful guardianship in future over these interesting remains.

At this place we shall enter our boat, and commence our exploration of the river. The kind of boat used by travellers is termed a *dahabeah;* the cut exhibits its general form, which much resembles our old London civic barges. It is constructed to draw very little water, as the Nile is very low in winter, when travellers generally go upon it; it is a difficult boat to get off shallows, and the utmost precaution will not prevent its grounding sometimes upon the ever-shifting sands of the river-bed. The saloon and cabins are all on deck, and occupy one half the length of the vessel; a dining saloon, with a broad divan round it, is first entered, and beyond it the sleeping cabins are arranged. No provision

whatever is made for the sailors or native servants, who generally cover the front deck with an awning of sail-cloth, and so sleep on the boards. They look like so many bundles of old clothes, when thus arranged for the night; for they twist the *burnous*, or cotton *malayat*, over head and feet in a way that would smother persons unused to such packing. When they row, they lift alternate planks from the



deck, sitting on such as remain, and dropping their feet through the openings, resting on the ribs of the boat as they propel it with very long oars. When the wind is fair, the sails only are used; when it is foul, they are at once furled: but if the rowers do not use the oars, they commence "tracking," or towing the heavy vessel, by means of a

rope, to which smaller ropes are attached, and passed over the shoulders, one to each man. The progress is exceedingly slow, five miles a day being about the usual average. The boatmen never use the sails for tacking, as we do; they are too large and unwieldy for that purpose, and are occasionally dangerous, if sudden gusts of wind catch them. To this they are liable on a sharp turn of the river, particularly where cliffs rise; when the wind sets full against these headlands, there is nothing to be done but to anchor the boat to the bank, and wait till it ceases. It is not unusual for travellers to be confined thus to one uninteresting spot for two or three days, the winds generally bringing clouds of fine dust from the deserts on each side the river, filling the air with a yellow haze. Without these annoyances, but with an adverse wind, we were five days going as far as we returned in one day, with a fair wind.

These large sails are managed by ropes passed to the steersman, who is certainly the most important person on board. He gives orders for their management, and directs the vessel's course. Should a squall arise, the sails are quickly let go at the lower ropes which secure them to the sides of the vessel; but it is not unusual for tables to be upset, and a complete smash occur on board in the midst of a

calm, by a sudden burst of wind from a gap or cliff side; and to hear screaming and confusion among the sailors as if all were going to destruction. The rudders of all the Nile boats are very large. The *reis,* or captain, is little more than a "routine" addition to its freight; he tells the sailors to do what they must obviously do without such orders; he smokes all day, or occasionally puts his hand on top of an oar some one else pulls; his real utility consists in standing at the head of the boat, with a long pole, and sounding the depth of the water to avoid shallows. In all these arrangements of captain, steersman, and crew, the most modern vessel on the Nile (which ours was) is precisely similar to the most ancient ones depicted by artists in the days of the Pharaohs.

Boats are generally hired at Boulak (where their builders live) at certain rates per month, or by the trip of three months or more. They vary in price according to style or size; it has risen considerably within the last few years, owing to the great influx of visitors; thus more than one hundred and thirty of these boats ascended the Nile in the winter and spring of 1860-61. The average is from £50 to £70 per month, and the expenses of a crew as follows; each item being put in English money, and being one month's pay:—

	£	s.	d.
Reis or Captain . . .	1	10	0
Second Captain or Steersman .			
Sailor	0	15	0
Dragoman or Interpreter . .	15	0	0
Cook	7	0	0
Waiter or General Servant . .	5	0	0

The small sums paid as wages to captains and sailors, are, however, considerably increased by the expenses to which the traveller is subjected in feeding them, and giving "backsheesh." A stock—lentils, corn, and bread—is laid in for a certain calculated time in starting, and is renewed at different large towns on the river, where the travellers are expected to rest for twenty-four hours to bake bread enough till another stopping place be reached, generally four places going, and the same returning; these are usually Minieh, Siout, Girgeh, Keneh, Thebes, Esne, or Assouan, according to the time wind or weather permits each to be reached. The "backsheesh" consists of a money gift, about fifteen shillings or a pound,—or the present of a sheep, which comes to the same money. The "backsheesh" is always converted into animal food for the voyage, as well as partially expended in the purchase of the ripe sugar-cane, which is cut into small pieces, and sucked with infinite gusto on all occasions.

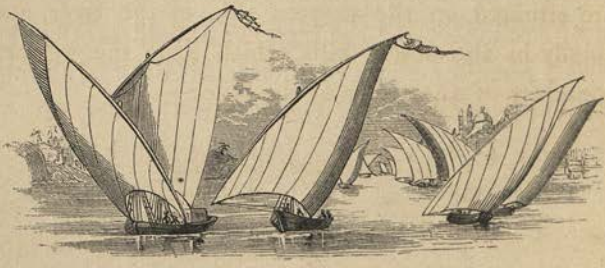
The dragoman is the person who profits most largely on the voyage. He is generally intelligent, and a good linguist; mostly from Malta or Alexandria. One well-known man began life as a donkey-boy, and will end it as "a rich fellow, go to, one that hath two coats, and everything handsome about him." The dragoman arranges everything, purchases everything; has large profits on every transaction the traveller enters upon. He is the person tradesmen court, and whose patronage they will secure by extortionate allowances; the traveller is merely his banker, and is cheated with his ears and eyes open, totally unable to help himself. Should he attempt to purchase by himself, he is as much cheated, the shopkeepers being delighted at the chance of getting all the cash in their own hands: but a dragoman does not scruple to call and demand his share should he discover the man, who dares not refuse it, lest his future custom be destroyed; for the whole class combine to keep trade away from the man who does so. The traveller is, therefore, a veritable Sindbad during his voyage—with his dragoman, like the Old Man of the Mountain, heavy on his shoulders, and not to be shaken off.

It is possible to adopt a mode by which a good deal of annoyance may be saved; and this is, by

agreeing with a dragoman (which may be done at Malta) for the hire of the boat and crew; he taking the entire responsibility of the journey. You have, therefore, only to arrange his personal fee, and a certain sum per day for the rest. A friend of the author, with a party of four others, made this arrangement, paying for each person at the rate of £1 English per day. For this everything was provided—breakfast, with eggs or cold meat; dinner, and coffee in the evening. Wines, liquors, or tea, were not included; but a table was kept, irrespective of that, with which all were satisfied. It is necessary that a clear preliminary understanding should be entered into, and the traveller should arrange to have a certain amount of time at his disposal during the voyage to land and view the antiquities, towns, or places, as he may wish; or else the letter only of the arrangement will be kept. Instances have occurred in which persons have been hurried past the places they came to see and stop at, under pretence of "no agreement" to do so, or that wind or weather necessitated "getting on." Thus an entire voyage may be rendered inutile and annoying.

Let us suppose our own boat well manned and victualled, departing with a fair wind from Boulak. The only striking object there is the palace erecting for the Pasha; it occupies three sides of an extensive

court-yard, but, like every other new building in this country, it has no trace of the fine old native taste, but is a sort of semi-Italian design. The picturesque island, El Rodah (or "the Garden"), two miles and a half in length, is now passed; its palaces and pleasure grounds hiding the main land. It has many shady spots to which the people of Cairo resort; at its southernmost point is the Nilometer, which is traditionally said to be the place where the infant Moses was discovered by Pharaoh's daughter. When we started, on the



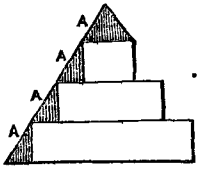
morning of January 5th, 1861, a large number of boats had been waiting for more than a week for a fair wind; and on looking back from this point, the effect of the continuous group of vessels with all sails spread, floating like immense birds upon the river, was very peculiar; and I copy above the

sketch I took of the scene. Ghizeh is on the high bank to the spectator's left; the ferry at Fostat to the right; the long low building in the island is the Nilometer; Cairo, the Mosque of Mohamed Ali, and Mount Mokattam above all. A turn of the river carries us from the busy scene into a very lonely one; a long series of sandbanks on one side, and pyramids on the other, both backed by distant hills, are all that meet the eye for many miles. The number of these remarkable monuments is greater than we usually imagine, and is thus detailed by Colonel Vyse. "The pyramids of Middle and of Lower Egypt are thirty-nine in number; they are situated on the western side of the river, and chiefly in the desert hills, which form the western boundary of the valley of the Nile:—

1	was	in	the	Nome Latopolitis.
33		„	„	Memphitis.
2		„	„	Heracleopolitis.
3		„	„	Crocodilopolitis.

They occupy a space, measuring from north to south, of fifty-three miles." Those of Abouseer first come in sight at about seven miles distance from Ghizeh. The largest has been denuded of the stones which once filled the angles of the ranges of platforms composing it, so that it looks like a series of ruined

steps. Dr. Lepsius, and other *savans*, are now persuaded that this exhibits the mode in which all pyramids were constructed, and that they were built in a series of such platforms or degrees, filled in (as at A in the cut) with other or triangular stones, like those found at the base of the Pyramid of Cheops, and the summit of the second pyramid beside it; that their foundation was laid in a central chamber, to be the mausoleum of the king, and which was prepared during the life of the monarch, who gradually enlarged it, by increasing and adding step by step, each one affording spaces or terraces for workmen and machinery to lift the ponderous stones from the lowermost to the highest. Herodotus says they were completed from the top downwards, an assertion easily understood, though long a puzzle to his readers, if we imagine them perfected at the apex, and at each platform in succession below—the best and most easy mode for the labourer to complete his work.



M. Mariette has had the good fortune to make one of the most interesting of modern discoveries, at a short distance to the west of these pyramids. It is the exhumation of the Apis sepulchres, where

the sacred bulls were buried, with the sarcophagi and commemorative inscriptions to each. Their value and curiosity may be understood from M. Mariette's enumerations of stelæ and inscriptions, altogether amounting very nearly to 7,000, of which 3,000 refer to these bulls. They date from 670 years B.C. to the latest time of Egyptian paganism. The Temple of Serapis, in which the

living bull was exhibited to its worshippers, was above these galleries, which were excavated in the limestone rock, having lateral chambers 25 or 30 feet high, each appropriated to a separate mummied bull, placed in a huge granite sarcophagus from 12 to 14 feet high, and from 15 to 16 feet long. The engraving represents one of these creatures in its

varied bandages, strapped across to a few palm-staves that it might be lifted easily; it was obtained from this district by the late Dr. Abbott. Each vault was closed by a stone wall, and the vaults and passages were lined and arched with masonry. It was believed that the greatest of the gods, Osiris, lived among the Egyptians in the form of this animal, which was always of pure white, and bore certain signs. Herodotus says, that for the sacred bull to be distinguished, his black forehead must have upon it a perfect white square, upon his back must be the figure of an eagle, and under his tongue another peculiar mark. Ælian says he must have twenty-nine distinct characteristics before he can be accepted as the abode of the divinity. When he died the country went into mourning until his successor was found, but if he lived more than twenty-five years, his priests drowned him in the sacred well. When his successor was found, the utmost rejoicing took place, and it was on such an occasion when Cambyses returned to Memphis from his unfortunate expedition into Ethiopia, that he mistook the general gaiety for a celebration of his defeat, slew the priests, and wounded the bull with his own sword, so that the animal died soon after. When the Alexandrians glorified their city with a Serapeum, and it rose in wealth as Memphis decayed, they

were anxious to transfer the abode of the sacred animal to the newer city, and we cannot say that one of these disputes may not have had an important effect on Britain, inasmuch as the Emperor Hadrian was called away from our island to pass through Gaul to Alexandria, and settle the dispute that was raging in Egypt on this point.

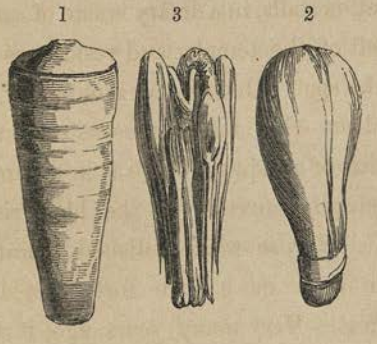
The Sakkara Pyramids are but a short distance from the Apis Cemetery, which lies between them and Abouseer. Colonel Vyse notes eleven of them, once existing here; all are much ruined, and of many little more than foundations can be traced. The largest, represented in our cut, very clearly displays the mode of building we have already alluded to. It is called by the Arabs "Haram-el-Modargeh" (the pyramid of degrees). The exterior form comprises six degrees or stories, each of which had the shape of a truncated pyramid, and is successively smaller than that below it. They vary in height, and gradually diminish toward the top. It is composed of loose rubble enclosed by walls, the lowest ten feet high. Within it are a quantity of passages and chambers, so that it appears to have been an extensive catacomb, rather

than the tomb of a single individual, according to the opinion of Mr. Perring, who, with Colonel Vyse, minutely examined the entire series of these erections in this part of the Nile.

Upon this plain, and probably upon a part of it now covered by the deviation of the river, stood in ancient times the great city of Memphis. There are now few traces of the once busy capital, where Moses and the Jewish captives lived and toiled. A few foundation walls, in a dreary waste of sand, are all that are left of the temples and residences that once crowded the spot. One solitary monument tells of its past grandeur—the broken colossus of Rameses II., the Sesostris of antiquity, which is now thrown down and periodically covered by the high rise of the Nile; it is of pure white polished limestone, and must have been more than forty feet in height when perfect. Very many years ago, it was given to England; but the government that could cheerfully waste £21,000 in trying to make a clock strike at Westminster, has never been rich enough to carry from Egypt any important gift. All that our museum possesses is chiefly owing to individual enterprise, or has been bought cheap in sale rooms by niggardly grants from an unwilling exchequer.

Dr. Abbott's extensive museum was almost entirely composed of antiquities found at Sakkara during his

stay at Cairo. In one particular spot of that vast cemetery are pits, in which are found vases filled with eggs; and not far from that spot are some extensive excavations, filled with the mummied Ibis, in coarse earthen jars, piled up on each side. They are of a peculiar form, circular and conical, with a lid, which is generally well secured by cement. Fig. 1 represents one of these jars as they are



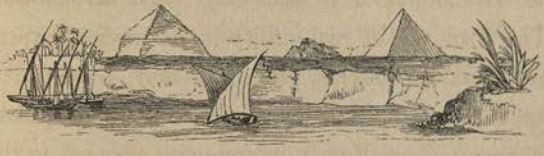
first found. The bird is thickly enveloped in cloths, and lapped in an outer covering, which is bound at the narrow end, as shown in Fig. 2. If these wrappers be all removed, we see how ingeniously the bird was packed; the neck and head were folded over the breast, the wings brought close to the sides, and the long legs folded up and brought beneath the beak, as in Fig. 3. There was no sacred

creature among the ancient Egyptians more cared for, living or dead, than the Ibis. It was sacred of Thoth, the Egyptian Mercury, and, according to Plutarch, was believed to typify the moon's changes, in the mixture of black and white feathers it bore. It was an emblem of purity, because it would never approach impure water, hence the priests went to the spots frequented by the Ibis, to obtain the water they used in their purifications. To have killed one of these birds would have subjected a person to the punishment of death, even, according to Herodotus, if it had been done involuntarily. The bird was of real utility in destroying serpents and noxious insects, and this may have led to its early veneration in Egypt. It is frequently represented on Roman monuments engaged in this useful work.

The Ibis is now nearly extinct in the country, although it has never been destroyed for food, which might otherwise have accounted for its rarity. A naturalist, who has visited Egypt four times, could only obtain three specimens.

Passing on, the Pyramids at Dashour come in view. Our engraving exhibits their aspect as they rise above the alluvial plain. Two are of stone, and are very little ruined; two of brick, of which but small ruined fragments remain—one may be

seen in the centre of the following view. One of the stone pyramids is remarkable for its form: if completed in accordance with the slope of the upper angles, it would have had a low, heavy effect, unlike any other, but the lower portion has been completed at a totally different and very sudden slope. Lepsius and others cite this one particularly as a proof that their mode of explaining Herodotus is the right one, and think that this pyramid was in process of addition during the life of the sovereign



whose mausoleum it was intended to be; that it was finished down to the line where the more rapid inclination commences, and afterwards completed by the successor, who saved by this deflexion of the angle more than half the amount of the labour and material which would have been expended in carrying out the original design. The larger portion of these lower casing stones was removed by the late Defterdar Mohammed Bey, to aid in the construction of a palace he was building near Cairo.

At Masarah, on the opposite bank of the stream, are the vast limestone quarries from which the ancients procured the material for their buildings. Their entire method of cutting the stone is perceptible; the early inscriptions and sculptures testify how ancient these quarries are, as they note under whose reign certain portions of them were worked, and for what public buildings they were used. Their great extent proves how valuable they were to Memphis.

The dark groves of acacia, or the groups of more solemn palms, by their greenness and vigour, testify to the rich nature of the soil. The ancient writers abound in praises of the gardens which once surrounded Memphis, and the lilies that crowded its canals. There is still one of these great works for necessary irrigation, the Bahr Yussuf, or Joseph's River, which bearing the name of the friendly ruler, is traditionally said to have been constructed by his orders. It runs beneath the Libyan hills, and distributes the waters of the high Nile to the edge of the cultivated land. We shall meet with little to arrest attention until we come opposite Maydoun, situated about five miles from the river upon the canal named above. Here we part with the last of the Pyramids. It stands on a rock, and is popularly known as "the False Pyramid,"

from a belief that the centre of this ancient work is not in reality constructed by man, but is a portion of the rock: the base of the Pyramid is 530 feet square. Walls of masonry slope at a very obtuse angle, above half its height; upon this platform a smaller mass of the same form is erected, and a third, still smaller, crowns all. The effect of its outline, and that of its rocky base, is strikingly singular when the sun sets behind the dark mass, with a ruddy glow unknown to colder climes.

The scenery of this part of the Nile is very flat and monotonous. It has been well described by Colonel Vyse in the following words:—"The general appearance of the country is that of a fertile plain, bounded by the desert on a much higher level. The barren mountains are at considerable distance on the western side, but approach nearer on the eastern, and occasionally come down, in the form of rocky cliffs, to the edge of the stream.

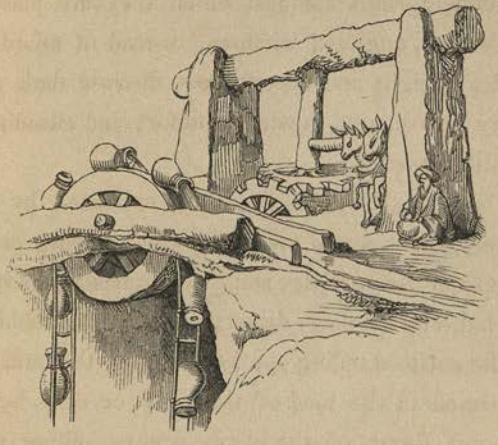
"The villages are situated amidst open groves of palm-trees, upon mounds of rubbish which frequently conceal the foundations of ancient towns; and, being

sometimes embellished with lofty minarets, and with one or two considerable buildings, rendered conspicuous by whitewash, and by regular windows, they produce, at a distance, a pleasing and characteristic effect; but, upon a nearer approach, nothing can be more forlorn than the flat-roofed houses, built with clay-brick of the same colour as the adjoining land, and often more dilapidated than the ancient ruins amongst which they are placed. The vacant, unglazed windows, instead of affording an idea of light and cheerfulness, disclose dark and dreary apartments, to which comfort and cleanliness are alike strangers.

"Nor is the scenery much enlivened by the listless groups seated under the walls, to bask in the warmth of the noon-day sun; by the naked children, and half-starved dogs, dispersed among the rubbish; by the cattle standing on the brink, or the buffaloes immersed in the mud of the river, or even by the graceful forms of the Arab women, filling their jars at the all-bounteous stream.

"Excepting occasional exclamations, the perpetual groanings of the unwearied *sakias*, turned by cattle, or the splashings of the water, raised by a succession of baskets worked by manual labour, are the only sounds to be heard. Nor are many objects to be seen moving along the banks."

The modes of needful irrigation alluded to are the first novelties that meet the eye of a stranger on leaving Cairo. The *sakia* may be described as a wheel, with cogs placed horizontally, and turned on a perpendicular beam, to which a yoke for oxen is attached; making the cogs, as they perambulate,



turn an upright wheel, connected in its axle with a very large wheel at the edge of the river bank. Over this wheel passes a continuous double cord, to which earthen water-jars are tied at intervals; and which bring up water from the stream, emptying it by the turn of the wheel into a trough, and then

descending, mouth downwards, for a fresh supply. The water thus raised passes from the trough into a series of trenches, cut at right angles all over the fields or gardens. Each tiny stream has a dyke of its own; and the earthen mound which prevents an undue amount of water from flowing over any portion of the ground, may be allowed to do so when the husbandman pleases, by merely pressing it down, or pushing it aside with the foot. This custom is alluded to in Deuteronomy xi. 10, where Moses contrasts the promised land with "the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs."

This machine was not anciently known in Egypt, and appears to have originated in Persia. It is common in western Asia, and is known as "the Persian wheel." Some portion of the water is lost in being awkwardly discharged into the trough; the construction of the machine, too, is generally of the clumsiest order; hence you may always know when you are near one of them, by the groaning and shrieking of the dry ill-fitting portions of the woodwork, as well as by the continual splash and fall of water. Light sleepers or invalids will consequently do well to avoid having their boats anchored near one of them, for with the earliest

dawn the cattle are yoked to the wheel, and their monotonous course for the day commences.

The other mode of raising water is by the *shadoof*, or pole and bucket; this is done by manual labour,

and merely raising the water to a series of levels until the high land is reached. One man only may thus be seen labouring when the land is not far above the water; but generally two work together; and frequently a series of these machines, one above the other, are each actively engaged by a pair of labourers, as shown in our cut. The supports for the cross-bar on which the pole hangs, are either

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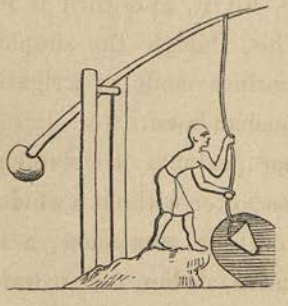
formed from the stump of a palm-tree, or made by a pyramidal heap of clay. From the cross-bar hangs the pole by bands of palm-fibres: at one end is a heavy lump of clay, at the other is secured, by a thong of fibres, a suspended central-stalk of the palm-branch; to this the basket is hung, and dipped into the water by pulling the palm-branch downward—the weight of the clay lifting it at once when the man pleases, who seizes the basket by the handle above, and the loop below it, and empties it into a small reservoir behind him, which has been dug in the earth for its reception. From this stage it is raised to the next by his fellow labourers. This mode of watering the land is profoundly ancient, and is frequently depicted in the earliest tombs of Egypt; the cut is copied from one of them. The simple machine, and the equally simple dress of the *fellah*, or peasant, have not altered for three thousand years. The village life on the Nile banks and the desert life of the Bedouin, have preserved, during all change, the features of the Bible era. Dr. Kitto says, "This



principle is very extensively employed in eastern Europe and western Asia to the raising of water from wells. It prevails from one end of Russia to another, as also in Asia Minor, parts of Persia and Syria." This simple contrivance may, however, be seen in use nearer home, for in the extensive market gardens at Fulham and Brentford the same mode of lifting water-buckets from the wells is adopted.

There is still another and simpler mode of raising water, but it is confined to land on the lowest level; and is most frequently used in the Delta: it is often seen in the course of the railway journey from Alexandria to Cairo. It consists of one large bucket, with a double rope fastened to each side of it; and is managed by two men, who, standing on each side of the trench or reservoir cut in the bank, dip it in the water, lift it, and turn it into the tank above them. This, though the simplest, is in reality the most laborious mode of irrigation adopted by the Egyptian husbandmen.

The houses of the poor peasants are wretched hovels of mud; hollow cubes, often without a window, only a rough wooden door for admission; a few pieces of rude crockery, basins, dishes, and a water-jar, are all their contents. The better-class farmers, or the village Sheikhs, reside in a mansion which, though mainly built of mud, is also partially con-

structed of sun-dried bricks, arranged in some places diagonally, with interstices, so that they ventilate the house as well as decorate it. Sometimes the house is further ornamented with red and white-wash, laid in large lines, with chevrons between, reminding the spectator of portions of the wall decorations of many of the oldest Egyptian tombs. These decorations are always bestowed upon the house of a Hadji, or pilgrim to Mecca, by his fellow villagers on his safe return. The lower rooms of a house are generally used for stores. The upper ones communicate with their roofs, and are generally used as dwellings, the inhabitants in summer sleeping on "the house-top," as in ancient times.

The situation of the villages may always be detected in the level plain, by the groups of palm trees that shoot up around and among the houses. The natives think that God has given the date-palm as a peculiar favour to the Muslims, who are destined to be masters of every country in which it flourishes. It was the favourite fruit of the prophet, who says of it:—"Honour your paternal aunt, the date-palm, for she was created of the earth of which Adam was formed." The palm-tree has several well-known properties that render it, in Asiatic opinion, an emblem of a human being; among which are these:

that if the head be cut off the tree dies, and if a branch be cut off another does not grow in its place. Our views of the towns of Sharouna, Tahta, &c., exhibit the form of this tree, which is highly valued for its fruit, while its wood is used as building timber, sufficiently strong for a dry climate and the fragile walls with which it is combined. It has a double value in the eye of a native, because it is a tree that requires no attention while growing, and thus does not interfere with farm labour, producing a regular mass of fruit without trouble or manuring. Every tree is numbered, and its owner has to pay a tax upon each to the government.

For a very long and tedious distance, the voyager will see little else but flat land, with here and there a clump of palms, announcing a village, each one as featureless as the other, and all so much alike that when you examine one you have seen all: the desire of novelty, a feeling of *ennui*, never enters the mind of an ordinary Egyptian.

The geological features of the river, as exhibited in the hills of the Arabian and Libyan chain, are the most interesting points for the eye to rest on in this portion of the river; and bear traces in their conical shapes and broken forms, of the rush of waters that once passed over or around them, when the great convulsion occurred which parted the

mountains, and opened this great central valley for the passage of the Nile. The sketch engraved below was taken at Zaytoun; it depicts the Arabian

side of the river, and well displays the varied forms assumed by the core of the rocks, often taking the shape of the step-pyramid, or "castled crag," in the dim twilight.

The banks are frequently enlivened by groups of women and girls, who regularly come there to fetch water and wash clothes. The latter is not a very heavy task, for little clothing is worn, and it is seldom changed by its wearer, who is often content to keep it upon him till it drops off in rags. The water-carrying is a serious and never-ending labour, a real drudgery; for the heavy jars borne on the women's heads (seen in our cut in page 101), are clumsily constructed of clay, and weigh from seven to eight pounds each when empty, and from seventy

to eighty pounds each when full. Some are made smaller for children's use; all are carried upright on the head, the woman being aided by another in lifting it there; the end of the jar being received in the hollow pad, placed on the head of the carrier.

"Nothing of interest is met on the Nile between Zowyeh and Benisouef," says Wilkinson; hence, if the wind be foul, the voyager must make up his mind to a few of the dullest days of his life. The lower part of the Nile and the Delta is very like the lower part of the Rhine and the marshes of Holland. The stupid monotony of the scene is wearisome indeed! Yet, in defiance of all this, some enthusiasts declare "the Nile is never monotonous!" So says one of the most modern of the creed; but his accuracy may well be doubted when he describes the sugar-stalks that strew the river-bank at Minieh, as the bones of the sheep slaughtered that their blood might be used in the sugar-factory there; and who also declares that the great temple at Dendera "exists only in the imagination" of Miss Martineau!

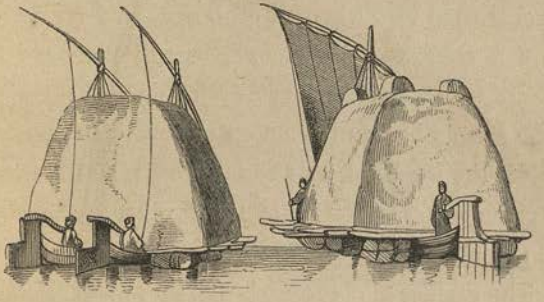
We may pass the time in noting the boats that float by us in all variety, from the native *dahabeah* to the smallest row-boat. The *dahabeah* used by the Egyptian is a far ruder thing than that provided for European travellers; but it is precisely on the same principle of arrangement and construction: it

has its cabin, and as much convenience as its passengers care for. It is generally exceedingly dirty and overcrowded, and bears the character of herding vermin, from rats to the minutest creeping things. It used to be the custom to sink all boats at Alexandria or Cairo for a few days before Europeans entered them; but now hired boats may be had without this preliminary drowning. Cleanliness has been found to pay best at Boulak, and boats may be

had without this unrecognised "live stock" on board. Still, it is very necessary to be cautious in the outset, and the traveller should examine for himself, and trust to no one, ere he commits himself, his family, or friends, for a three months' habitation in any vessel.

The usual traffic boats are exhibited above; they are merely ribbed and planked, without deck, flat

on the stern where the heavy rudder acts, and sharp at the prow, which rises considerably; they have but one sail, which is managed by the steersman, as we see it in ancient Egyptian paintings. These boats are chiefly employed in the transport of grain, and are at times very heavily laden. The sides of the boat are sometimes raised by fixing rough uprights and nailing planks to them, as seen at the stern of the second boat in the foregoing cut. This



addition is caulked, or rather plastered outside with mud, laid on very thick. No cabin is in these boats, its want is unfelt by the boatmen, who have the faculty of sleeping at all times and anywhere, according to the accident of the hour.

The capacity of these boats for carriage is great. In going up the river, the traveller will frequently encounter them floating down the stream, each

holding a small mountain of straw. Sometimes one boat holds it; at others two are brought together, and the pile built over both. The straw, before it is thus packed, is chopped fine, as food for camels, who are employed by thousands all over Egypt; it is carried on board in baskets and piled on a framework of palm-sticks, which project very far over the river on each side of the boat, and are then supported by trusses of straw tied to them, and floating on the surface of the water. The piling of the mass is entrusted to a few men on board, who arrange it like a truncated pyramid; generally finishing the whole with a small pile at each angle of the apex. The second boat in the cut on the previous page, exhibits the whole of this arrangement, and beside it is given a representation of the two boats combined, as already alluded to.

The smaller kind of open boats, the *sandal, felookah,* &c., are mere row-boats, usually connected with the larger vessels, and resemble the old lumbering English *dinghee*. There is an open boat that will most frequently attract the traveller's notice, and that is the ferry-boat. It is generally (like that in our next cut) of the heaviest and roughest construction, as if knocked together by a country carpenter, rather than made by a boat-builder; it is a mere framework of timber, upon which rough planks have

been nailed, sometimes overlapping each other. It is paddled across the stream by a rude oar, made of a flat bit of timber, chopped to the shape of a narrowed handle at its upper end. The heavy rudder is equally rude in construction; yet in such boats men, women, and cattle may be seen thickly packed, slowly crossing the river with the gravity of

the East. Half a dozen donkeys, or a camel or two, often occupy the centre.

Men who are fond of shooting may find abundant amusement in this part of the Nile, which abounds in wild birds. They assemble in large quantities on the low marshy land: in about two hours a friend killed twenty-nine ducks, eleven geese, and three teal. Some persons now visit the Nile solely for shooting. When wild birds fail, pigeons may be had in any quantity; they are all private property, but the natives seldom object to their being shot—though instances to the contrary have occurred where even the offer of payment would not induce them to

grant the privilege; but this was when the houses were full of young pigeons, whose lives depended on the parent birds. The objection was made by the few inhabitants of what might be termed a "pigeon village," near Benisouef. A view of the place is given, Plate III., and comprises all the habitable houses to be seen there; they are the homes of the peasants who look after the birds. These houses are the usual mud cubes; but some are mere open screens of reeds, held together by hay-bands, as seen in the centre of the view. The pigeon-houses are built of mud, like small round towers, surmounted by a group of cupolas; one of them is seen to the right in our view. Globular earthen pots, similar to those seen in many English villages, are built into the mud walls, for the nests of the birds, who enter by means of circular holes below. A small low door at the base of the tower, admits the man whose business it is, once in three months, to enter and take the young pigeons for market, as well as clean out the guano, which is sold at a good rate, as the best native manure. Ranges of these pigeon-houses, confined by a curtain wall, ran for half a mile into the fields, at right angles from the houses in the view; and gave an appearance of a strongly-fortified town to the very innocent place.

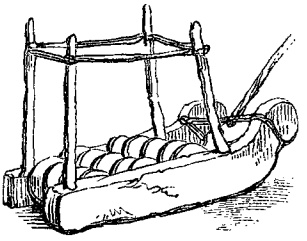
Benisouef, although the residence of the governor

F. W. Fairholt, del et Sc.

Vincent Brooks, Imp

PIGEON VILLAGE NEAR BENISOUEF.

of a small province, is a very dull, uninteresting country town; deficient in any good public building, and not worth a two-mile ride across a hot plain to see. Upon the plain, some of the rude contrivances of the husbandmen may be studied—the wooden collars and palm-fibre ropes for securing cattle to the rude plough; or the *norek*, a machine for threshing Indian corn. It is like our harrow, but with a row of wheels in place of hooks, and is dragged over the corn by two oxen, who describe a wide circle round the clay threshing-floor, and have their foreheads tied to a beam which passes across them, and to the centre of which the *norek* is secured by a rope. A man, bearing a long staff with a goad at the end, walks beside and directs them, or sits upon the light frame of stick and cord built on the side bars of the machine, which in passing over the corn threshes out the grain; the metal wheels, being sharp on the edges, at the same time cut up the straw, so that the food for man and beast is prepared by this one simple process.



On looking back, after passing Benisouef, the range

of distant mountains is picturesque: as we advance, the river view resumes its Dutch character, and is at times so perfectly tame, that a few horizontal lines sketched on paper would comprehend its entire features, with the addition only of some shrubs and palm trees. The river itself is a clay-coloured stream, much impregnated with sand and the *débris* of the rocky country it passes through. It is gritty and muddy to the taste, but very soft; it is always filtered for strangers; but the natives profess to consider it the finest and most wholesome water in the world, and assert that it loses the better part of its sanitary quality when purified thus. But as this deposit soon settles in the large water-jar from which the daily supply is taken, most of the objectionable part is absent from what the peasant uses. Some persons of the better class allow it to stand for a day or two, in a jar rubbed with a paste of bitter almonds.

The fish of the Nile are sometimes large and fine-looking. The best are a species of carp and perch. As a general rule the large fish are the worst flavoured. The flesh is soft and muddy, the prevailing fault with all river fish. The traveller, in his course, will have daily opportunities of testing them for himself, as many persons live by catching fish, and carrying them to the larger towns for sale.

Beyond Isment, about four miles from Beni-

souef, we pass the great quarries where the fine veined marble is obtained, of which the Mosque of Mohamed Ali, in the citadel of Cairo, was built. Soon after the scene again becomes a dead flat, except where groups of palms announce the presence of small villages. Then Tanseh, Brangeh, and ultimately Bibbeh, are reached; the last is a large town of mud hovels, built round the curve of the river, and forming a convenient harbour for the Nile boats that line its banks. We anchored here for the night, but were soon driven beyond the town; for, as evening set in, the inhabitants were all lighting their fires to cook their evening meal, and, as the fuel consists of cakes of dried dung, from camels and other animals, the stench was stifling, when combined with all the other abominations of a populous and untidy place. As a rule it is best to anchor near to, but not in front of, a town or village.

Nearly opposite this place, Wilkinson notes the existence of the ruins of an ancient fortified city, partially built with inscribed bricks of the time of the Sheshonk who was contemporary with Solomon; and having also fragments of the Roman era, and a stone quay at the water's edge. It was built on a rocky elevation, and is interesting to the Egyptian student; but is scarcely worth the delay to an ordinary traveller, who will not comprehend a few ruined

brick walls. The ancient Egyptians wisely used such eminences for the foundation of cities, leaving the low arable land for farming.

Malateah is the next place of any consequence; and is nearly a hundred miles from Cairo. Here the mountain chain again approaches the river; the stratification of the rocks take fantastic forms.

The softer layers, yielding more rapidly to the action of decay, leave ponderous ridges of harder stone as a girdle to the hill; our cut exhibits this, from a sketch taken near the town. The Nile, a little farther on, is like a very broad lake; but in winter is very shallow, so that boats were continually grating the ground; and the men who jumped in to push them off, never went deeper than the knees in water. Even our row-boat occasionally grounded. The mountain range on the Arabian shore continues to increase in height and grandeur, until it culminates

F. W. Fairholt, del. et. Sc.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

SHAROUNA.

in the noble cliffs at Gebel Sheikh Emberak, which reminded me in one part of our cliffs at Dover. After a few miles the mountains again recede, and leave a fertile plain, in the midst of which lies Sharouna, another good example of a country town, forming the subject of Plate IV. The houses are generally gaily painted in red and white, seeming to show the debased remnants of an old Egyptian style; the bricks are arranged so as to form a ventilating pattern on the walls, and an open parapet is generally on the house-top. The doors of many houses were decorated with carved and coloured beams of wood, and over the centre of one I saw an earthenware English plate, of the world-renowned "willow pattern," inserted in the wall as an ornament, after the fashion of the old Moorish tiles in the Alhambra, and the Della-Robbia terra-cottas in Italy. Sharouna is a large, straggling place; its inhabitants seem to be exclusively husbandmen, and to cultivate the sugar-cane largely,—enormous bundles are brought in on people's heads, or thrown across the backs of donkeys, sweeping the road on each side of them, and raising clouds of dust, amid which the driver sometimes sits gravely on the top of beast and burden.

The lonely country here presents a profound contrast to what it must have shown in the days of the Pharaohs. The mounds of ancient cities appear on

all sides; and if we can picture in our mind's eye the hill forts, the thriving villages and towns, with their decorated temples, the villa-residences of the noble, the banks covered with busy labourers, or the towns filled by a dense population; the gaily-painted chariot dashing along the banks, or the equally gaily-decorated barge, with its coloured sail, floating on the water—we may have some faint idea of Egypt, in the palmy days of its native kings.

Ghindieh and Abou-Girgeh, both on the western bank of the river, do not call for any special remark. At El-Kays, Wilkinson is disposed to place the site of the ancient Cynopolis, a city where the dog was held especially sacred. "It is worthy of remark," he observes, "that one of the principal repositories of dog mummies is found on the opposite bank, in the vicinity of Sheikh Fodl. It was not unusual for a city to bury its dead, as well as its sacred animals, on the opposite side of the Nile, provided the mountains were near the river, or a more convenient spot offered itself for the construction of catacombs, than in its own vicinity; and such appears to have been the case in this instance."

At Sheikh Hassan, on the western bank of the river, we again meet with some of the extensive limestone quarries worked by the ancient Egyptians. The cubical masses they have separated in various

layers down the sides of the strata, and the angular walls thus left, give the whole an appearance of a fortified city on a hill top. There are remains close by of ancient buildings of sun-dried brick,—and a small temple may also be seen. An immense boulder or fragment of rock lies nearer the stream, and is shown in the foreground of our cut; many

similar occur along the banks of the river, and have been carried thus far and deposited in the great rush of waters, when those geological transformations took place that have left the country in its present condition. Anything more hopelessly arid than the crumbling hills and sandy plain that bound the strip of pasture land, cannot be conceived, and present the most perfect contrast to the rich green fertility of the opposite bank. Sometimes an opening in the hills shows the dry waste of sand stretching far away into Arabia. Yet the *fellah* is squalid and

tamed by long oppression; while the Bedouin is healthy, active, and will bear no insult. An Arab author says, "Plenty and degradation is peculiar to Egypt, poverty and health to the desert." The temperate, active habits, and the independence of the son of the desert, keep him free from all disease, and preserve manly character. The miserable subjugation of the Egyptian peasant, and the many tyrants he has to contend against, from his master up to the viceroy, have completely destroyed him as a reasoning being, and his abject obedience is paid for in his dish of lentils,—like Esau, he has sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

The river winds considerably in this district, and

when the wind is foul it may happen that by laborious "punting," and "tracking," the boat may not go farther in one day than the pedestrian might walk in one hour, by taking a direct path from the base of the curve to the opposite point. Golosaneh is the first large town we shall meet; it presents no new features, unless we except the pigeon-houses which

line its outskirts, and one of which we engrave as a specimen of the ornamental character sometimes given to them by the native builder. Some islands occupy the centre of the stream opposite the town; but there are no features of the scenery on this part of the stream that call for especial remark until we pass Serareeh. Nearly opposite that place, but at some distance from the water, is the town of Samalood; it is picturesque in its general features, the minaret of its mosque being a boast among its peasant neighbours, as an example of what its native builders can do. The fertility of the land, and the listless content of the people, are both perfect in their way. The dogs alone display activity; they are a wild, wolf-like race, and fly forth with most savage howls; but invariably keep at some yards' distance from the person, as if, in fact, they were warning the stranger from a nearer approach on their master's domain, and which they are ready to resist, but not to molest him, if he does not attempt to overstep the bound. They invariably went back to their own huts as the strangers moved away from them. Their owners generally call them back, if they see them run at strangers. The peasant is never uncourteous, except in places where the Europeans congregate, and have brought out his greed for "backsheesh." Generally speaking, travellers have

themselves to blame for the large amount of incivility and extortion they complain of.

The rocks, which have been gradually approaching the river on the eastern side, now form bold cliffs many hundred feet in height. The nearest is known as the Gebel-el-Tayr, or Mountain of the Bird, from a curious Arab legend attached to it, thus given by Wilkinson:—"All the birds of the country are reported to assemble annually at this mountain, and after having selected one of their number to remain there till the following year, they fly into Africa, and only return to release their comrade and substitute another in his place." The lateral ledges of the sandstone rock, upon which the birds rest in the sun, safe from all molestation, have led to the choice by them of these cliffs as perching-places; and long lines, numbering many thousands, may often be seen here, and probably originated the legend, which may be traced far back, for the writer above-quoted adds, "The story is probably another version of that mentioned by Ælian, who speaks of two hawks being deputed by the rest of the winged community to go to certain desert islands near Libya, for no very definite purpose."

On the very summit of this rock, is the Coptic convent of Sitteh, or Sittina, dedicated to the Virgin, and inhabited by a small community of

F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc.

Vincent Brooks Imp.

CONVENT OF SITTINA.

monks, whose long black gowns, with wide hanging sleeves, and tall round caps, give them somewhat the aspect of stage necromancers. They subsist on the produce of small portions of land, and are exempt from taxation. The convent and church are confined within dreary walls, from which steps lead downwards to natural platforms on the rock, as exhibited in our view, Plate V. From this platform fissures descend to the water, where they open into small caverns. By this means the monks come down to the river, and leaving their clothes behind them, dash into the stream, clamorously begging of all boats passing. As they have abundant leisure, they don't throw any chance away, but post themselves along the entire face of the rock at various intervals, and on the flat shore opposite. Two of them swam out to meet our boat on its approach, loudly proclaiming themselves Christians all the way they came. When helped on board, they crouched down and wrapped themselves in an old sail, asking first for something to drink. This obtained, and duly swallowed, they then begged for money, for more drink for their brethren and the chief of the convent, and ultimately for the bottles they had emptied. The latter they use to hold oil, aniseed, &c., which they cultivate on their lands, and sell in the markets near. The money they carry ashore in their mouths, the bottles, &c., in the left

hand, swimming sideways and using the right arm only as a paddle. Once on board, they were in no hurry to go. It was by no means agreeable to see Christianity at so low an ebb, represented by so despicable a set. The boatmen were, of course, far from civil; and when one continued his importunity after he had obtained gifts, and would listen to no refusal, they unceremoniously pitched him into the water. Certainly those who do not respect themselves, have no cause to imagine others will respect them. Surely this convent might manage its begging with more decency, by sending a man in a boat, and not thus allowing a whole horde of naked wretches to disgrace themselves before people who already despise them too much.

The Hon. R. Curzon, in his account of "Visits to Monasteries of the Levant," has given a graphic and amusing description of his ascent up this cliff, after he had been assisted to the cave at its foot by two of the priests, who "swam like Newfoundland dogs." A narrow fissure, about the size of an ordinary chimney, had to be climbed. The abbot crept in at a hole at the bottom, "and telling me to observe where he placed his feet, he began to climb up the cleft with considerable agility. A few preliminary lessons from a chimney-sweep would have been of the greatest service to me; but in this branch of art my educa-

tion had been neglected, and it was with no small difficulty that I climbed up after the abbot, whom I saw striding and sprawling, in the attitude of a spread eagle, above my head. My slippers soon fell upon the head of a man under me, whom, on looking down, I found to be the reis, or captain of my boat, whose immense turban formed the whole of his costume. At least twenty men were scrambling and puffing underneath him, most of them having their clothes tied in a bundle on their heads, where they had secured them when they swam or waded to the shore. Arms and legs were stretched out in all manner of attitudes, the forms of the more distant climbers being lost in the gloom of the narrow cavern up which we were advancing, the procession being led by the unrobed ecclesiastics. Having climbed up about one hundred and twenty feet, we emerged, in a fine perspiration, on the face of the precipice, which had an unpleasant slope towards the Nile." A more agreeable ascent leads from thence to the monastery, a square walled building entered by a low doorway. The church he describes as "one of the earliest Christian buildings which has preserved its originality:" it is partly subterranean; the apsidal end is built in the recesses of an ancient stone quarry. It is constructed on the principle of Latin basilicæ, not cruciform; the portion in which the congrega-

tion assemble being perfectly square, the roof supported by columns in advance of the walls, a lattice parting the sanctuary therefrom, which is much smaller and is reached by steps. That, and a small cell beside it, are cut in the rock, as shown in the plan given in Mr. Curzon's valuable little volume.

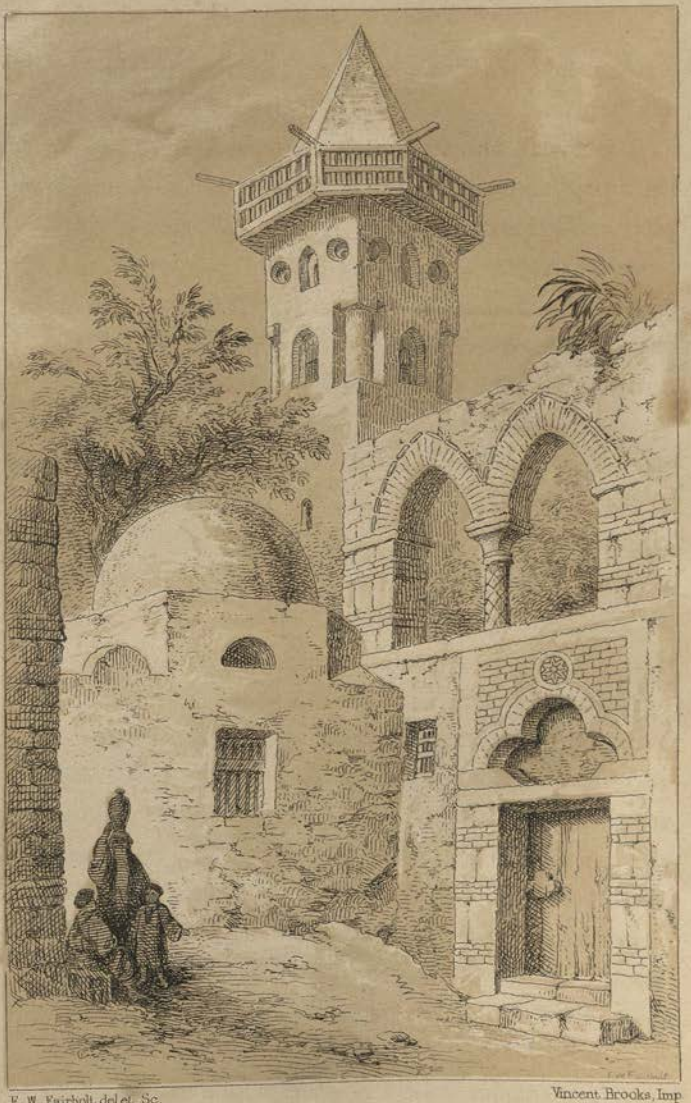
Nothing of interest occurs on the river between this point and Minieh; when we have arrived there we have travelled one hundred and sixty miles beyond Cairo, and have left behind us the flat and uninteresting portion of the river, as far as scenery is concerned. Henceforth the eye and mind have more employment.

CHAPTER V.

MINIEH TO SIOUT.

A VERY busy scene greets the eye from the landing-place at Minieh; no town on the Nile banks seems more replete with industry. From a very early period the inhabitants have been famed for greater trading energy than is usually found among the Egyptians. A large sugar-refinery, established by Mohamed Ali, gives great occupation, not only to the townspeople, but to the country around; and it is no unfrequent sight to find a line of village wains, of the most primitive construction, drawn by buffaloes harnessed in an equally primitive style, with palm-fibre ropes, and clumsy wooden collars, hooked to the shafts, bringing in heavy loads of sugar-cane. The *débris* of the crushed cane strews the strand. Here a lover of the picturesque may be gratified by viewing the native boats load and unload, the *dahabeahs* arrive laden with natives, or more aristocratically fitted

and filled with travellers, who all stay here, for it is the place "to bake bread" for the crew: thirty hours is usually allowed for this; the order is given on landing, and the dough kneaded, and bread baked, while the boat remains. As soon as the loaves are deposited on board the boat, they are cut up into transverse slices, each being again cut through the centre, and then spread in the sun to dry; they are repeatedly turned over, and subjected to the process till they become almost as hard as ship biscuit; this prevents them from getting musty; and as they are eaten after being soaked in hot water and made into a pottage with red lentils, the whole thing becomes a sort of pasty mass. It is turned into an immense wooden bowl placed on the deck, round which the crew sit, each man, captain included, thrusting his hand into the mass, and lifting to his mouth as much as he can carry. It has been the favourite food of the poorer classes in Egypt and Palestine from the earliest time, and is believed to have formed the ingredients of the "mess of pottage" for which Esau sold his birthright. It is nourishing, but not so much so as beans or wheat. We eat it in England, but under another name, at a very greatly increased price, as a panacea for all kinds of diseases, under the name of "Revalenta Arabica." The English delight in physic, and they may well rejoice at this, for it has at least one great advantage over



F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

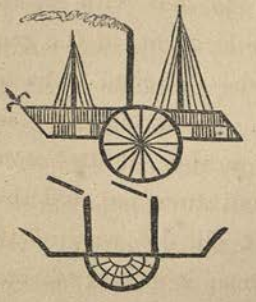
MINIEH

many other popular cures—it cannot possibly do any harm.

It is worth the stranger's while before he enters the dusty streets of the town to linger at the landing-place and look around. A Sheikh's tomb, embowered by the branches of an old plane-tree, is a picturesque feature in the scene. The houses with their trellissed balconies overhanging the river, the temporary coffee-shops, sometimes a mere shelter of reeds, or a tent after the Arab fashion, combine with the boats, the people, the broad river, and the bold cliffs on the opposite bank, in forming a scene as striking as any we shall meet on the journey. Like all Oriental cities, the romance is dispelled when the realities of the place are examined. It is but a great, dusty, dirty town; the streets merely lanes between mud houses. There are some few exceptions, where they put on a more ambitious character, and "exalt their gates" with a framework of elaborately sculptured stones, as in Cairo. In the older part of the town combinations of antique buildings, now neglected and falling to decay, present attractive points for the pencil. Plate VI. is an example of this: the Sheikh's tomb, the half-ruined mosque, the groups of trees which grow undisturbed where they have planted themselves, and the quaint tower with its wooden balcony—from which the muezzin

announces his faith, and prayer time also—give a fair idea of a quiet corner in these old towns.

There is a wretched bazaar in this town—the shops mere hovels, the divans in front of them plain mud banks covered with old carpet or rude matting; but it is busy and lively. The boatmen patronise it largely, and they term it "good." The stranger, in threading the lanes towards it, may notice some few houses with very highly-painted doors. They are surrounded by whitewash, upon which groups of flowers, birds, and animals are painted in a style almost equal in point of accuracy to those on a girl's sampler or boy's slate. These striking enrichments denote it is a bathing house. The native artists seem to have been much impressed by the railway and steamboats which European enterprise has introduced among them. A railway train is no unusual decoration across the door, and steam-boats are also occasionally distributed among the birds and flowers. They are so very original in style that I copied two of them, and here recopy my sketches, that the reader may judge of the faithful nature of an



Egyptian drawing of machinery. They are painted in bold black outline; the body of the vessel relieved by patches of red. The upper one is somewhat removed from a resemblance to a cart by its masts; but the lower one with its double funnel has become so much more of an indication than a representation, that if the gradual recopying of an original, each less like than the former, be not borne in mind, it would be difficult to say what it was intended to delineate.

In this town I had the first instance of the strength of native superstition as regards the evil eye. In Cairo it is usual to suspend some amulet round children's necks, to preserve them from its influence; it often consists of a pear-shaped pendant, with a few lines from the Koran engraved on it. As I passed down one of the streets of Minieh, a little child was playing beside its mother at an open door, and looked up to me with pleased curiosity, which led me to smile on it, to the great discomfiture of its mother, who snatched it hastily up and drew it out of sight. I saw my error and turned away, hearing the mother mutter some counter-charm, fling a potsherd after me, and then hurriedly shut the door. It will be wise of the traveller not to notice children; it is never favourably received; the poor tacitly encourage the dirt and squalor of their favourites, in order that

they may have no attraction for the dreaded eye. Strangers who have praised children have been earnestly implored by weeping mothers to destroy so unlucky an omen, by spitting in their faces, or showing some equally "lucky" mark of dislike. This feeling is particularly strong among the Arabs. Colonel Vyse relates a striking instance; he says:—"The Arab that we procured as a guide at Sheikh Abadeh, was accompanied by his son, about seven or eight years old. I happened to take notice of the child, and to give him a piastre, when his father immediately took him away, exclaiming that I wanted to murder him, in order to find hidden treasures by means of his blood."

Superstitious credulity is rife in Egypt, nor is it confined to the humbler classes. A belief in witchcraft is very prevalent; and I was told, by a very sensible, well-educated man, a story of a "witch-woman" as he termed her, who had taken some offence at a man, and had changed him into a crocodile for thirteen days, when he returned to his natural form, very much better behaved towards her for the gentle hint thus given him of what a contrary course might produce. As my countenance very probably expressed incredulity, he looked very grave at me and added, "It is very true. I have seen the woman who did it. I have seen her with these

eyes!" This led to another tale, as a confirmation of that just related. A woman in Cairo, whose husband was frequently up the river many months together, or at Alexandria a year at a time, on one of these occasions added a son to the family circle, of which it was impossible the husband could be father. The lady herself did not for one moment attempt to fix such a proper paternity; but asserted that the father was an Efreet, or evil spirit, who had deceived her by taking the form of her husband. The obvious explanation of her adventure was scouted at once, when hinted at, and the supernatural theory adhered to, in preference. Indeed, it may be taken as a certain rule, that anything may be believed and excused, if supernatural agency be connected therewith. All persons are more ready to believe the mystic than the true. The mode by which they come to conclusions perfectly satisfactory to themselves, is quite characteristic of minds overloaded with anti-critical faith. They dissect a story far enough to meet with something which accords with their own belief, where they at once rest from further investigation, and accept the whole as well-confirmed truth. Thus, in the story given above, the witchcraft was believed because the woman who was supposed to be a witch, had been seen with the narrator's "own eyes." In

the same way the son of the Efreet had been "seen," which was deemed conclusive; and when I ventured to hint, that seeing a person imputed to be the son of a spirit was no proof that he really was one, I was triumphantly met by the assertion—"He is half an Efreet himself, his eyes are like fire, and when he dies he will become a heap of ashes!"

In the rocks opposite Minieh are many sepulchres of an early date. The wise sanitary laws of the ancients prohibited the burial of the dead near the abode of the living. Hence we find the tombs of the ancient Egyptians in the rocky hills that bound the land on each side of the river; but most generally on the eastern or Arabian chain of mountains which approach nearest to the stream. The dead were carried across the Nile, with much ceremony, in funeral boats, expressly constructed for such service; and Wilkinson conclusively remarks, that "it was the old Egyptian custom of ferrying over the dead, that gave rise to the fable of Charon and the Styx; which Diodorus very consistently traces from the funeral ceremonies of Egypt."

The eastern bank keeps up its character of rocky dryness for a very considerable distance; sometimes the river is edged by the rocks, which, by the gradual detrition of their upper surfaces, have formed sloping banks of sand. There are the remains of

some ancient cities here, but they will not reward the ordinary traveller by their exploration, inasmuch as they consist of little else than mounds of earth, fragments of crude brick walls, and heaps of broken pottery. One of these places, about two miles from Sooadee, is named Kom Ahmar, or the Red Mound, from the quantity of potsherds, and the burnt walls of the old town once there. The rocks beyond the town will, however, reward the exploration; as many contain sepulchral chambers of a very ancient date, with sculptured representations of scenes in ancient Egyptian life of a curious kind; they have furnished us with some of those interesting pictures, which resuscitate the palmy days of the land, when "the wisdom" and power of the country culminated under its native princes.

Some large islands break the monotony of the river on our upward progress, and the general aspect of the country becomes much more picturesque. The villages present the usual features, and have all a wonderful family resemblance. Sharara, on the western bank, is a good example. A group of mud houses, with dusty lanes between, is situated in the midst of a small forest of date-palms, and plantations of sugar-cane. Indigo is also grown here, but the Egyptians are not clever in preparing it as a dye, and hence have very little demand for it, except by

the native dyers. There is no reason, however, beyond ignorance or indolence, why this and many other things might not be usefully and profitably cultivated in the country. It is impossible to see so fertile a soil so wretchedly farmed, without thinking what might be made of it with capital, enterprise, and a fair amount of freedom guaranteed by a good government. But with the great drawback of an indolent and tyrannic one, that visits the industrious man with increased and capricious taxation, and thus gives a premium to indifference and idleness, it is wonderful that so much is done as we already see. If the day ever dawns on the East, when its rulers shall cast aside their palace-born ideas, become more human, and act as if they understood mere prudential honesty in government, Egypt may again be a land of plenty and prosperity; and the stranger will no longer witness the monstrous anomaly of want and misery in a country of spontaneous growth, and easy husbandry.

Grain of all sorts is the chief part of the trade of the river; boats up-heaped with it we meet constantly as we travel; and we see large storehouses filled with grain, when we land at towns or villages. At some quiet sheltered spot on the stream we may be made cognisant of a deceptive trick, practised by the boatmen of the corn-vessels, which is very

characteristic of the way in which cheating is conducted here; inducing each man to take every opportunity of defrauding his neighbour. The farmer having put on board, for the corn-dealer at Cairo, his just quantity, the captain and crew stop on the road, unload the vessel, dig a small reservoir on the side of the river's bank, and soak the grain in this water, by which means they add to the weight of the whole mass, and sell the difference; the captain taking half the plunder, and the sailors the rest.

With all their inborn love of trickery, the peasants have a childlike simplicity, most amusing in its results. In strolling about the village of Sharara, we came on a group that evinced this. Some boys were playing a game with hard-boiled eggs; the game consisted in rolling them down an inclined plane made in a sand bank, and he who hit his neighbour's egg took that, and as many others as had been rolled down before in trying to hit the mark. These boys were surrounded by a group of men, many quite venerable old fellows; but they entered into the chances of the game with an interest the most profound; joining in the quarrels it engendered with as much relish and vigour as any of the boys displayed. At one time the winning depended on such nicety, that a general quarrel arose; partisans took up favourite sides, and with

the principals it seemed as if nothing short of murder could finish it. The loser cried, screamed, and gesticulated in his rags; until a grave old passer-by was called on by all parties to give his decision. When he had done this the party broke up, their feelings being evidently too strong to continue any game of chance; the winner's side shouting and laughing in mad glee, the loser roaring in tears and refusing all comfort. These violent fits of rage, succeeded by showers of tears, are characteristic of the people, and perhaps act as a safety-valve to their tempers. I was amused with an instance on board our own boat. Our captain gave some order to a sailor, to which he returned a careless reply, and did not move to execute it. On this, the captain laid down his pipe, and stalking towards him with much dignity, expostulated in two or three brief words, ending by slapping his face. The sailor, originally flushed and insubordinate, at once retired to the opposite side of the deck, threw himself into a corner, and burst into a flood of tears, which lasted a good quarter of an hour, and could not be stayed by the sympathetic addresses of his mates. We must imagine a similar scene enacted on board an English boat, to feel its full absurdity.

In passing by the village we saw the ravages done by the river in its flow, after the inundation. It had

washed away houses and walls, and torn up palm-trees by the roots; some of the small passage-boats had been tossed on the banks, and the timbers strained into curves by the force of the water. Every year mischief of this kind occurs; and as the stream in many places gradually encroaches on the banks, it saps and undermines the houses of towns, and gives them a singularly ruinous look, as we shall see higher up the river.

About four miles farther, and we come in sight of the famous rock-cut tombs of Beni Hassan—the first great and curious antiquities to be met with since we left the Pyramids, and a foretaste of the interest that envelopes Thebes. These famous tombs have furnished us with the most ancient and curious representations we possess of the daily life of the ancient Egyptians in the Bible era, for at that early period were they executed. There is scarcely an incident in ordinary life that is not delineated on the walls of these wondrous old tombs; or any of the games and amusements that were indulged in on the banks of the Nile, three thousand years ago, unrepresented.

They appear to have been chiefly noted by the travellers who visited Egypt before the present century, as the temporary homes of the anchorites who once made Egypt famous. Thus Norden says:—

"The mountains of this quarter are famous on account of the grottoes of holy hermits that have formerly made their abodes in them." Now, this part of their history is forgotten in the absorbing contemplation of the far more valuable pictorial histories on their walls.

The position of these remarkable cave-sepulchres

will be best understood by the above engraving from a sketch made on the Nile-boat. Advantage has been taken of the hardest strata in the limestone rock for their excavation, and they are at a considerable eminence above the sandy plain. The houses to the spectator's right are the ruins of the village of

Beni-Hassan, which must have been large and populous; but the inhabitants were of Arab descent, and could not resist a constant warfare on all boats that passed them on the river, plundering the vessels and ill-treating, or even killing, the crew, if they attempted resistance. Complaints at last became so loud at Cairo that, eventually, Ibrahim Pasha took the matter in hand in the true Oriental style—sent off abundance of soldiers and a few cannon, drove out all the people at a moment's notice, and battered their houses into the ruin now presented. All the inhabitants were thus forced to vacate; many were killed; such as remained had but the usual informal and summary trial, which only preceded execution by a few hours. A native assured us he was at one time in Siout when fifty of these thieves were hung in one day; the chief, or ringleader, the cleverest and most dangerous rogue of all, was afterwards caught, but he had money and influence enough to obtain a respite of his sentence from Cairo, which was forwarded in all haste to Siout, where he was incarcerated. It was at once placed in the governor's hands there; but he being convinced of the danger of letting such a rogue loose again, at once hurried him to execution, putting the respite in his pocket, and assuring the authorities that it came too late.

The inhabitants of this side of the river have always had a bad character; they were mostly of Arab descent, wary and accomplished thieves, who swam quietly to boats in the night and robbed as a professional avocation. Their notions were similar to those of a Scottish borderer in the middle ages; and, like him, if they were pursued they had merely to cross the hills, and they were off safely to the desert, where it was useless to follow them. The boatmen at the present day retain so lively a sense of their past rascalities, that they never anchor on the eastern bank of the river if they can possibly avoid it. There is a local guard provided at each village, which can be had on the payment of a trifling fee, for the protection of the boat during the night. It consists of one or two men, as the traveller wishes, who are armed with muskets, and who occasionally discharge them to warn off thieves: they are equally useful to keep off dogs, who have sometimes a habit of indulging in continuous barking at a strange boat and its crew until midnight, and beyond, unless dispersed to their own homes by a discharge of powder among them, which never fails in starting them.

The series of tombs at Beni-Hassan are reached by pathways leading from the plain up the sloping sides of the *débris* of rock fallen from the cliff above them; these footpaths are often very ancient, and

are marked at intervals by large stones placed at their sides. A narrow platform runs along the front of the tombs, from which a strikingly characteristic and picturesque view of the windings of the Nile is obtained. The tombs are among the most remarkable in Egypt; the earliest bears the date of 43rd year of Osirtasen I. (1777 B.C.). The paintings are not in so good a state of preservation as I expected to find them; some are very fragmentary, others almost obliterated; many are wonderfully clear, and all unusually interesting as pictures of Egyptian life in the remote era when they were executed. Many are very delicately drawn in little more than outline; all are mere water-colour paintings on stucco; and it is wonderful that works executed before Joseph visited the land should still remain unspoiled, except by the educated barbarians of Europe, who cut and scrawl their abominable names on some of the most curious parts of the pictures. We shall find abundant reason to deplore this mania throughout our journey in Egypt, and in a great degree it destroys its pleasure; for it is impossible to feel other than shame and anger at seeing this wanton and foolish mischief, done by persons who have not the excuse that a native might offer for doing it—an ignorance of their history or interest, and a religious dislike to pictures of that

class. All persons who travel the Nile must be men of some station or property; they do not belong to the poor or the ignorant classes, yet they have done, and are doing, more mischief to these ancient monuments within the last thirty years than have been done to them by the action of time, or the ignorance of Arab or Turk, during three thousand! It might naturally be supposed that monuments so useful as these have been in testifying to the minute truth of Bible history, and of the oldest historians in the world, would be respected as an almost equally sacred bequest from the past. Yet men of learning, whose reputations have been made by the study and explication of these very monuments, have not scrupled to mutilate them in the most reckless way; and men of title have not shamed to try for worthless immortality by cutting their names upon art-works so precious. Surely a rightly constituted mind would shrink from this disgraceful notoriety. The titled names are Italian, which makes the Vandalism more surprising; but all Europe seems, by the names inscribed, to glory in the practice, against which the most indignant remonstrance should be raised, or in a very few years the world will only possess the pictured resemblance of the works of art so wantonly and rudely destroyed, and that by nations who so loudly boast of

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INTERIOR OF TOMB, BENI-HASSAN.

a march of intellect, and who are so ready to pharisaically revile the Oriental peoples.

The most northern tomb, or that nearest to the visitor as he ascends the river, is the most interesting of the series, and the most elaborately decorated. A portico, supported by two columns, is in front of the entrance—a square door surrounded by lines of hieroglyphics. On entering, a grand hall or vaulted chamber opens to the view. It is supported by four massive columns, similar to those seen at the entrance; each column has sixteen slightly-fluted sides, and supports an abacus, the whole bearing so striking a resemblance to the Doric order, that it is evident the Greeks obtained this their earliest architectural style from such more ancient monuments. The triple vault of the ceiling is filled with coloured ornament, in compartments. In front of the entrance is a small shrine, which, like the entrance gate, is surrounded by lines of hieroglyphic inscription. Broken figures, a triad of divinities, still occupy the places where they were worshipped of old. Plate VII. is a general view of this interesting spot; to the right the broken pillar presents one of those melancholy instances of wanton, useless mischief, that have just been alluded to. The columns have been coloured to imitate red granite, also about three feet of the lower part of the walls;

above this, to the ceiling, they are laid out in long lines of figures, engaged in husbandry, fowling, fishing, and domestic occupations; as well as wrestling, dancing, ball-play, and other amusements. On the side wall, to the right of the entrance, sits the owner of the tomb, to receive from his overseer an account of his flocks and herds, or his household goods. This being the principal figure, in accordance with the rule of ancient art, is of gigantic proportion—a great man was a *large* man, in the sight of the old world; hence our popular tales of gigantic ancestors in all nations. We may consider these rooms as the chapels of cemeteries: the resting-places for the dead were excavated in pits beneath, and were entered by square shafts, in the sides of which holes were cut to facilitate descent. In some of these tombs we shall see these shafts opening to the mummy-pit below. The next chamber to this is much simpler in its style, has but a square door in the rock as an entrance, and little in the way of coloured decoration. It belonged, says Wilkinson, to a Nomarch, or provincial governor of this part of Egypt, as did most of these large tombs throughout the land. The proprietor is here introduced by his scribe to a procession of strangers, who were once affirmed to represent the family of Abraham; this tomb was said to be that of Joseph; and

we were led to believe that we saw him in one of the most interesting events of his life, depicted in his own time, and probably at his orders or expense. The fault of the French *savans*, who in the boldness of an ignorant infidelity brought forward the Ptolemaic zodiac at Dendera, as a most ancient relic of a people who lived in unrecorded ages, has here been rivalled by the credulity which would find too much, and reduce the age of a monument to make it figure an event of so private a nature that it was never likely to be represented on a monument at all. This (like the other) belonged to a local governor of this district, who was named Nehoth, and lived long before Joseph's era, as appears by the names and dates given upon these walls.

Many of these tombs are mere square chambers; the walls sometimes retain but a few fragments of the paintings which once covered them. As we pass southward they change in architectural character, exhibiting the earliest features of the Egyptian style. Our woodcut will show the striking difference between them; the roof slopes at a very depressed angle from the centre to the sides, and is supported by a pediment, with flat pilasters at the sides, and columns in the midst, dividing the interior horizontally and not longitudinally, as in that engraved in our Plate. They are said to figure (rudely, it

must be admitted) a group of the stem and bud of the lotus or papyrus, bound together beneath the buds, and based on a simple circular pedestal. They are the first germs of the beautiful capitals, designed from native flowering plants, which we shall see in the temples of the upper country. In the

foreground of our cut may be seen the shafts of entrance to the pits below, and the holes for descent already alluded to.

Passing still towards the south, in our narrow pathway, we may enter tomb after tomb, as closely packed as houses in a modern street. In many the columns have been broken away and removed, probably to "grace" some European museum.

Unfortunately the tombs become less interesting, plainer, and more decayed, as we proceed; until they terminate at a rocky valley above the village. It is the best mode, therefore, to begin from this central point and walk northward, when they increase in interest to their culmination, in that which forms the subject of our Plate. We call this valley a central point, because other excavations extend beyond it nearly two miles. They are unworthy the exertion and fatigue of a visit; one of them has an apsidal end, with an early Greek capital and moulding, which may lead to the inference that it was a sacred "chapel in the rock," with the early Christians of Egypt. But a more interesting relic is the cave of Diana, still existing in the ravine alluded to, and which, though fragmentary and unfinished, is a singularly curious relic of the ancient faith. It must be borne in mind that this is the Egyptian Diana, the lioness-headed goddess Pasht; but from this mystic personage descended, by the revolution of the religious superstition of ages, the more modern and scriptural "Diana of the Ephesians."

As we bid adieu to this interesting spot, it may be worth noting that its name is indicative of the tribe that founded it. The prefix Beni signifies "sons of," the second name distinguishing the head

of the tribe. Thus the names of most places on the river are translatable, and some specimens may be useful to quote here, as an aid to the traveller: a few instances of their combined use, as designations of places on the Nile, are given; others will readily occur. The proper names of our European towns were similarly significant when originally bestowed; but the changes of language and denizens have made most of them seem nothing but unmeaning designations.

Ain—a spring. (Ain Mousa, "Moses' Spring.")
Abou—father. (Abouseer, Abou-Girgeh.)
Bab—a gate. (Babzuweyleh, &c., at Cairo.)
Bahr—canal. (Bahr Yussuf.)
Beled—country or district.
Bender—a market town.
Beni—"sons of." (Beni-Souef, Beni-Hassan.)
Bir—a well.
Birket—a lake. (Birket-el-Hag.)
Deir—a monastery.
Gebel—a mountain. (Gebel-el-Tayr.)
Gisr—a dyke or earthen wall.
Gourna—a mountain promontory. (Gournou, Thebes.)
Hagar—stone. (Hagar Silsilis.)
Jez—an island.
Kafr—a village. (Kafr Zayat.)
Kahn—a depot for merchandise.
Kasr—a castle or fort. (Kasr-e-Sayad.)
Keber—great.
Keroun—low.
Kom—a high mound. (Kom-Ombos.)
Masara—a mill. (Masarah.)

Ras—headland or cape.
Sheikh—a saint or elder. (Gebel Sheikh Emberak.)
Sookh—a street of shops, or market.
Tel—hill. (Tel-el-Amarna.)
Wady—valley. (Wady halfeh, "the grass valley.")

The eastern bank of the stream still presents the most interesting features to the antiquary. The rocks are cut with tombs and votive chapels; but the exploration requires a large amount of time, and ensures great fatigue in the sandy tract where they occur. It often happens that an excavation which looks most promising from the river, turns out to be a simple quarry, unworthy the visit. The interest of many, too, entirely depends upon some point of value to the Egyptian student; but not of the slightest interest to the general traveller, who may be well content with the more important works that await him on all sides in his upward course.

At Sheikh Abadeh, we see the ruined site of the Roman city of Antinopolis; a city which owed its origin to the Emperor Hadrian, whose favourite, Antinous, having drowned himself in the Nile at this spot, with a superstitious belief that thereby he should secure Hadrian's happiness, that emperor deified his abominable friend, and founding this city, raised altars and instituted games in his honour. Remains of a theatre and hippodrome, fragments of temples, and indications of streets, are all that

can now be traced of what was once a beautiful city. Every year reduces these fragments, for as stone may be wanted in the neighbourhood, these ruins are put under contribution to supply it, and much has been also burnt for lime. It is fortunate that the French made and published accurate drawings and measurements of the finest of these remains, which existed so short a time ago. The portico of the theatre appears to have been very fine, with enriched Corinthian capitals; others, having volutes at their bases as well as their summits, were dedicated to the Emperor Alexander Severus, after the fashion of the Column of Phocas in the Forum at Rome. The whole of these remains, as delineated in the *Description de l'Egypte*, are very striking. It is melancholy now to look on them, and to read Wilkinson's description of what he saw here in 1822, and to remember that all have been destroyed for such worthless purposes as the manufacture of lime, or the building of canal bridges. The destruction of monuments within the last half century is lamentable; but still more so is the fact of their slow destruction by the yearly wanton mischief of European visitors.

Since Wilkinson noted the remains on the river, and even since the publication of his handbook in 1858, several of the antiquities he mentions have

been destroyed or injured. The Turks are to be blamed for much; they, like the Romans of the middle ages, could not resist the temptation of using the ready-hewn materials of the old buildings in the construction of the new. As the Coliseum re-appeared in the Barberini Palace, the temples of the old Egyptian faith served the viler uses of modern wants. Thus, at Sheikh-Fodl, above Abou-Girgeh, there stood two small temples, which have been completely destroyed within the last ten years, to construct with their stones a sugar manufactory at Minieh. Beyond Serareeh were two painted grottoes of the early time of Pthahmen, the son of Rameses the Great (B.C. 1245-1237), which Wilkinson speaks of as of much interest; one was utterly destroyed by the Turks after he had inspected them; the other he succeeded in saving, but only after the portico had been entirely ruined. He also notes the existence, some years since, of very interesting sculptures at Kom-Ahmar near Metahara, and that "they have been broken up by the Turks for lime." Science owes a debt of gratitude to such men as Wilkinson; and all travellers who carry his hand-book cannot fail to feel it daily. Few can appreciate, without a personal trial, the difficulty attendant on such labours, in a climate like that of Egypt. To travel painfully over dry and dusty roads, to toil in

the sun up rugged mountain sides,—sometimes with little reward for the labour, and always with the certainty of great bodily and mental fatigue,—is a task few would have the wish to set themselves, and fewer still the perseverance to carry out. There is a quiet heroism in this, also deserving the victor's wreath.

About two miles beyond this is a small settlement of Christians called Deir-e-Nakhl, behind which are some curious grottoes with interesting paintings. One, representing the mode by which the ancient Egyptians moved their colossal statues, has furnished Wilkinson with one of his most curious engravings, and which may be seen in his great work. (Series I., vol. iii. p. 238.)

We now pass Reramoon, a pleasantly-situated town, chiefly remarkable for the large sugar and rum manufactory, established about fifty years ago by an English gentleman, named Brine. The building, with its tall chimneys, is also as perfectly English as if it stood in Lancashire. At Oshmounein, on the same western bank, at some distance inland, are remains of the ancient Hermopolis. The luxuriance of this side of the river is perfectly Arcadian: groves of sycamore, gum, and palm-trees, fields of sugar-cane, corn, and esculents, all vividly green in the glorious sunshine, are most pleasant to the eye, after the flatness and aridity of the lower parts of the river. At Daroot-el-Shereef we pass the mouth of

the Bahr Yussuf, a canal which carries the high water of the Nile along the land at the base of the Libyan hills, from this place, beyond Cairo and the fork of the Delta, emptying itself into the Rosetta branch at Alkam. During its whole length it is of the utmost value in carrying the waters where they could not else be obtained, and assisting in the most important manner the labours of the husbandman; by means of dams the water may be retained after it has sunk from its high level. Its name preserves the tradition of its being one of the useful works originated by, and carried out during the rule of, the patriarch Joseph. The same important work is carried from this spot further south, by the Souhadj Canal, which ends at Farshout, midway between Girgeh and Keneh. By means of both, the plain of Egypt is thus irrigated for the length of more than two hundred and fifty miles. Canals of a similar kind are now in course of construction on the plains of the eastern banks; they are made by the forced labour of the *fellahs* or peasants, each village by which it passes being obliged to send its quota of workmen, and provide them with tools and food, until a certain portion is completed which has been commenced by the previous gang, and will be continued by a succession of other labourers, who complete only as much as waters their district; the irrigation

being considered by the government as payment for their labour, which is constantly supervised and enforced by taskmasters, who smoke all day in dirty dignity among the earth and sand-hills.

The Arabian mountains again approach the river at Isbayda. At Gebel-el-Sheikh Said, a custom is observed by the boatmen of throwing bread to birds of the gull kind, who fly after the boats, and pick it up from the waters, retiring with it to a ruined tomb they make their home, half way up the mountain. It is a plain cubical building, with a domed roof, the usual form of all such erections in the East, and covers the body of the saint who gives name to the mountain. Here he lived the life of an ascetic, in one of the many caves still to be seen, and amused himself by feeding the birds who flocked to his solitary home. On dying, he bequeathed the care of his feathered favourites to the boatmen of the Nile, who piously carry out his wishes, believing it most unlucky to neglect or injure them. They also firmly believe that the birds reverently place the bread upon the holy man's tomb before they eat it. They are rewarded for this charity and faith by seeing the birds entering the tomb, where probably their young await a share of the repast. Nothing can shake their belief in this legend, when they witness it thus confirmed, "with their own eyes."

At Tel-el-Amarna are the ruins of a very ancient city and sepulchres in the rock, where a people were buried who appear to have been invaders of the land. Judging from the representations in these remarkable tombs, they appear to have been an Eastern race, who brought with them the tyranny and oppression which characterised the Turkish tribes. They were worshippers, too, of the heavenly bodies; their religion differing from that of the native Egyptians. Their princes are figured worshipping the sun under forms not seen elsewhere, the rays ending in human hands, which present to them the symbol of life eternal. They appear to have been thoroughly hated by the Egyptians, who have erased their names wherever they appeared upon these monuments. These remarkable records of a race who may have been the "shepherd-kings" of the desert, noted by early historians, seem to have excited the interest of the Greeks, who have left inscriptions on these walls indicative of their impressions; but they appear to have been unknown to modern travellers, until Wilkinson discovered them by accident in 1824. Being distant from the river, the Nile boatmen and ordinary guides failed to notice them.

On reaching Gebel Abou-Fayda, we shall find the Arabian chain presenting precipitous cliffs, more picturesque than those at Gebel-el-Tayr. The rocks

assume more fanciful forms, owing to the waved character of their stratification. Sometimes they seem to start perpendicularly from the water; at others, they are varied by constant detrition, which piles their base with masses of rock, or mounds, on which scanty grass and a few trees grow. The water has worn many caves at their base; others above have been natural fissures enlarged for the residence of the early Coptic anchorites, who have made Egypt famous in monkish annals, and conferred saintly honours on the useless lives of these wretched ascetics. The evening was closing as we passed these rocks, and the sun set as we sailed towards the end of the ridge which again receded from the river. Under these high and desolate cliffs, a small bank was formed by the fragments of the rock and the mud of the inundations in a half circular recess, where we descried a bright fire lighted, and some little black figures leaping and running about it. Opposite, a boat was anchored, which proved to be a native slaver, whose freight was African children (about sixty in all), who were on their road to Cairo for sale, and whose captain was allowing this exercise on their voyage in a very safe place, where they could not escape or be very generally seen. This traffic is not publicly allowed, nor is there a slave-market there, as there was some twenty years ago;

but privately, the sale of children is still carried on. Eunuchs and general servants are thus obtained. The door-keepers at Alexandria and Cairo are invariably blacks; they are well dressed, well fed, and have nothing to do but idle in the doorway, and chat with other servants and passers-by, as they keep watch. The children we saw were many of them sold by their parents, and they seemed to have no regrets in leaving home and country; they were running about, laughing and playing, and would, in all probability, be infinitely better off in Cairo. They are always kindly treated, and as they are generally faithful and attached, they rise to good positions—always better than that of the Egyptian peasant, for they never, like him, labour hard and fare badly; if they become old without freedom, the Koran commands that they be maintained comfortably till death. They possess, in fact, the same right to proper treatment as the children belonging to the family of those who purchase them, and who, by that act, put themselves in the place of parents. The master has the right to their labour, or what it brings; and also what belongs to them, as he pays their taxes, and provides for their wants; but he may not mutilate or kill them, and they have redress at law for any unnecessary severity: much stress cannot, however, be laid on this fact, in a land where justice

is capriciously dealt, and the legal *quota* of fine or punishment is only half what is demanded when whites are similarly treated. The real truth seems to be that the black natives feel more dependent than the white, that they make better and more attached servants, that the Egyptians prefer them, as more honest and trustworthy than the poorer classes of their own people, or the Levantines, who would not so implicitly obey, as the blacks will. Hence the bond between them is the strongest of any—that of mutual interest.

Still, let us look in this way at the bright side of slavery as we may, it cannot be for one moment allowed, that the difference of colour or intellect can give a right to any tribe of man to enslave another tribe. The very fact of parents selling children to slavery, and thus destroying the most holy ties of nature—of ambuscades by strangers to kidnap children, of the horrors they suffer in the journey from home, of the cruelty and death that await them in fitting them for the seraglio,—the wars among the Nubian chiefs to obtain prisoners for the market, the entire absence of the merest decent human morality, and the misery and crime that come in place of it, all proclaim, with trumpet-tongue, against this phase of man's inhumanity to man.

Let us cast our eyes from the evil thing, and look around us, when the dawn breaks, on the works of man's Maker. We shall find a new feature in the scenery of the river now. The date-palm, which,

with its tufted head and rich cluster of fruit, has almost monopolised attention, now finds a brother in the Doum-palm, a tree never seen in Lower Egypt, or beyond the northern boundary of the Thebaid; hence it is sometimes termed the Theban-palm. It

differs from the date-palm in many important points. Instead of having a simple trunk and no lateral branches, the main stem divides into two of equal size and strength; each of these again branches into two others; this regular duplication of its branches being a curious invariable rule of growth in the tree. The terminal branches are crowned with a group of from twenty to thirty fan-shaped leaves; at the base of them the fruit grows, which is stringy and dry, about the size of a large apple, but more elongated; it becomes of a rich brown colour, and when ripe and soft is eaten by the peasantry and children, and is said to have the flavour of gingerbread. It becomes excessively hard, if allowed to dry upon the tree, and has been used as a socket for drills from the most ancient times by the carpenters of Egypt, whose descendants continue the custom. The wood of the tree is less fibrous and porous than that of the date-palm; it can be cut into planks, and is used for building purposes by the carpenters of Upper Egypt.

The river winds very much here, and is not without a considerable amount of pastoral beauty as well as grandeur, from the rocky promontories which advance and recede, as we maintain our course, with a frequency that destroys the usual monotony. Wilkinson notes that "the difference

between the low and high Nile in this part of Egypt, is twenty-one feet three inches, judging from the highest mark made by the water on the cliffs of Gebel Abou-Fayda, which rise abruptly from the river." At an earlier period it ran more to the Arabian side; now it encroaches so much upon the other, that the towns are yearly in danger from it, and ranges of houses are undermined and swept away. This is the case at Manfaloot, the town we next approach, and which was described by Pococke, in the early part of the last century, as a mile distant from the river. Now, more than half of it has been carried away, and the ruined houses show how brief is the tenure of the remainder. It has no attractions to arrest the stranger, unless he wishes to make a visit to the celebrated crocodile caves in its vicinity, and rejoin his boat at a lower bend of the stream.

The caves are distant about seven miles from Manfaloot, and to reach them you have to cross the plain and ascend the mountain; the desert here is composed of fine fragments of clear spar; it is intensely hot and dazzling, and sharp to the naked feet of the attendants who run beside you. The entrance to the pit is on the flat summit of the hills, and is a mere square hole, about eight feet long and twelve feet deep, into which the Arabs jump, and

then help you to descend. A very narrow aperture is on one side, into which you prepare to crawl, divesting yourself of all superfluous clothing. Lanterns are then lighted, as it would be dangerous to carry torches amid so much dried cloth and asphalte, which enwrap the defunct crocodiles below. The caves are of limestone, not fashioned by art in any way, and stretch underground for many miles. With the usual exaggeration of the East, the guides ask you, on entering, if you wish to come out at Assouan or Cairo! They have been explored from seven to eight miles, but are unvarying, except in accidental height or width. The way is tortuous and narrow; masses of fallen rock half choke some passages, and stalactites hang from the roof in places, and seem to oppose progress. Occasionally the traveller has to squeeze his way between piles of fœtid mummies, and this rough ceiling; the smell is generlly intense, the heat excessive, and the dust from the mummy-cloth choking in its effects. Bathed in perspiration you gasp for breath, and inhale the smallest possible quantity of vital air. There are only two or three caves in which it is possible to stand upright. All are crammed with mummied crocodiles; among them are a very few human mummies, supposed to be those of the priests who attended on the sacred reptiles. The crocodiles vary in size, from creatures

a few inches long, just emerged from the egg, to full grown ones, measuring eighteen or twenty feet from nose to tail. These large ones are carefully swathed in bands of cloth, as represented in our cut; the smaller ones are also bandaged, but are packed in layers, with palm branches between; and the smallest of them done up in little bundles.

There is danger in exploring these pits from the bats, which rush out of corners in considerable numbers and extinguish lights; but the greatest danger results from the easy possibility of losing the way among so many tortuous, narrow chambers—an accident which has nearly happened to several travellers, among whom was the American Legh, who has left a graphic account of the horrors of his visit, when both his Arab guides were stifled, and he barely escaped with life. A friend who explored them last spring, emerged by a fortunate accident: he had struck his arm against a projecting mummy, which almost blocked the passage, but enabled him

to detect the right one by that means, when the guides had lost their way, and gave themselves up to abject despair. He describes it as a most extraordinary, but most disagreeable and dangerous adventure.

The crocodile was anciently worshipped in this district, and, as a sacred animal, infested the river. Ælian gives a striking picture of the nuisance thus generated; and assures us that in the vicinity of the towns where they were fed and worshipped, the creatures increased so greatly, that it was not safe for any one to walk near the river's edge, to draw water from the stream, or, worse than all, attempt to wash the feet. They are by no means bold at present, and only do mischief when they can do it slily. They occasionally steal a sheep; and a short time before I went up the Nile, had made a meal of an unfortunate man, who had been working at a shadoof, raising water. Their long jaws will enable them to reach at a leg, and pull a man into the river, before he can know his danger. There is an Arab saying which assures us that the king of the crocodiles holds his court at the bottom of the Nile, at Siout; but they are now very rarely seen north of Thebes, and not generally met with north of Esné. The ancients gave as a reason for the origin of the worship, the protection they were against

robbers from the deserts on both sides the river, who dared not attempt to swim the stream in the night, owing to the number and rapacity of these creatures; and so the fields and villages were protected from ravages, which would occur if they were destroyed. Such is the explanation of Diodorus, to which others have been added by a French philosopher, M. Pauw, who observes that the towns most remarkable for the worship of the creature, were situated on canals, at some distance from the Nile: and as the visits of the crocodiles to them would be considered by all as a lucky omen, and their presence in any stream a proof of its purity, the priestly government was certain that all such canals would be kept in good order, and a sanitary religion be the consequence. This establishment of one nuisance to get rid of another, was not, fortunately, religiously followed elsewhere; for, out of their own district, the men of an opposite faith destroyed them mercilessly.

Between Manfaloot and Siout the river winds very much, and though the scenery is pleasing, it becomes very tedious to bend backward and forward, opposed often by contrary winds, for very many miles after the minarets of the latter town are in sight. But "time and the hour get through the longest day," as Shakespeare phrases it, and the traveller

has no doubt by this time laid in some small stock of the Oriental patience, that is so necessary to consort with Oriental sluggishness. Let him, like the Dutchman immortalised by Knickerbocker, reckon distances by the number of pipes his boatmen will smoke; and he will calmly end in finding his boat at the nearest landing-place to Siout, and this capital of Upper Egypt awaiting his exploration.

CHAPTER VI.

SIOUT TO KENEH.

ALL travellers agree in praising the situation of Siout. Placed in a rich and fertile spot, it has a luxuriant surrounding greenness most welcome to the eye. A pleasant ride of two miles, on a raised winding causeway, leads to the gate of the city. This road is sheltered by trees, which cast their agreeable shade across the path; the embankment protects travellers from danger when the Nile overflows the low lands. The bright colour of the verdure everywhere is most refreshing to the eye, after the sandy, dusty environs of other towns we have visited. Ireland is celebrated for its "emerald" hues in vegetation, but the green of Siout has more of the sun in it; it is a richer, warmer colour. The trees and shrubs in our northern islands can scarcely be called green, there is too much blue in their colouring. The horror of the Latins at the cold, black forests of Germania

might readily give credence to the tales of wild and mystic evil spirits, which originated in the gloom: the southern climate and its grateful woods were naturally peopled by Pan and the wood nymphs. Thus superstition becomes essentially a thing toned by climate; and if we imagine any ethereal beings about Siout, we should only dream that they were the good fairies of our childhood, as they appeared to us in the well-beloved "Arabian Nights' Entertainments."

Alas, for dreams of happiness and pleasure in the good world God has made for us! Man has been made ruler, and has rudely blighted all its goodness for his fellow man—ruthlessly decreeing misery and desolation in the midst of joy and plenty. It was thus in Siout, on the morning when we first entered it; the curse of a despotic government made itself painfully apparent as we came to its gates. A poor, half-frantic woman rushed forth shrieking, and fell fainting beside the outer wall. On passing the gate, we saw a great crowd, principally composed of women, who were flying from the soldiery employed in driving them, with long heavy sticks, from the entrance to an apartment in front of which long lines of conscripts were waiting their turn for examination. The wretched men, seized suddenly in their village homes, were fastened in long lines by chains, like criminals; and the unfortunate spectators were their

wives and children, or the elder members of their families, whose very existence depended on their labour, and who rejoiced over their rejection by the examining officers, or shrieked over their condemnation to military servitude. So hateful is this conscription to the people, that it is no uncommon thing for parents to deprive their male infants of an eye, or let disease take its course in doing so. Mothers often cut from their children the two upper joints of the right forefinger, so that they may be disabled from firing a musket; of the fourteen sailors in our boat three were thus maimed for life; and that may be taken as a fair average for the Egyptian fellahs generally. The least deprivation is the extraction of the front teeth to prevent the biting of cartridges. Such are the miserable shifts the poor people have recourse to, to keep their sons to the ill-requited labours of peasant life, and save their wretched homes from utter desolation.

Warburton has told the effect of all this tyranny in a few striking words:—"Five hundred thousand souls have withered from Egypt within the last ten years, under the blight of conscription and oppression."

The dusty streets of Siout are a rapid disenchantment for such as would dream of pleasant sojourn in the city that looks so beautiful from the out-

skirts. Tall, crude brick or mud walled houses, dingy, dirty lanes, a labyrinth of unpicturesque roadway, is all that greets the eye. Here and there a carved doorway tells of better-class residences, which, as usual, are carefully hidden from the street. Sometimes an open gate gives a glimpse into a fore-court, overshadowed with palm or acacia trees. The absence of flowers and flower gardens is a want felt everywhere; there seems little or no taste for the beauties of nature among the large mass of the people. Gardens, however small, seem to be only for grandees. A cottage garden is a thing unknown in Egypt. Village life is the very reverse of poetic picturing here.

Some of the mosques are large and handsome, and the palace of the Governor of Upper Egypt, which adjoins the gate, has much to please the eye; but generally there is less to employ the pencil in the streets of Siout, than in many towns of inferior rank. Its trade is considerable, for it is not only the emporium for the supply of merchandise, from Cairo and Lower Egypt, for the use of the upper country, but it carries on an extensive business with that district also, for the produce wanted in return; but its most important trade is that with the people who reside in the interior of Africa. Caravans cross the Great Oasis from Darfur, and bring much of

value—ivory, ostrich feathers, furs, drugs—destined to find their way over Europe. A busier town than Siout is not upon the Nile. Its artisans are all industrious, and there is a quickness about their movements not to be found elsewhere, even in Cairo. There is one branch of manufacturing art in which they stand pre-eminent, and this is, ornamental pottery; it is constructed from a fine clay obtained in the immediate neighbourhood, and is worked up into a variety of articles much prized by natives, and equally sought after by travellers. The surface of this pottery is coloured red or black, and receives a fine glaze, giving it a remarkable resemblance to the far-famed red ware of the Romans, popularly known as Samian ware. The most ambitious works of the Siout potteries are water-bottles and basins; they are remarkable for the elaboration of their decorations, which is produced partly by mould, but more generally by hand, as in the example we engrave, where ingenious manipulation and a correct eye alone have completed the work. There

is a large demand for these and other productions of the Siout potters; and it is sometimes difficult to get good earthenware in the bazaars, now that so many travellers visit the Nile, and the large majority seek to supply themselves with specimens. The potters have latterly taken to imitate European articles of use, such as candlesticks, tumblers, &c., upon which they engraft native ornament; but these things have a strange hybrid look, while their more genuine works have frequently great and peculiar merits. The great staple manufacture, however, is pipe-bowls, which are made in enormous quantities, and have the deserved reputation of being the best in Egypt. They are carried far and wide, and rival the bowls made at Constantinople; from which they may be distinguished by a deeper tone of red and an absence of gilded ornament. The London tobacco shops are seldom without specimens; but they are unfitted for smoking the heavy tobaccos of Europe, though admirably adapted for Latakia, and the light leaf of the East. Busy groups of men and boys may be seen in all the bazaars at work on these bowls, and a minute division of labour takes place in their fabrication, which would not disgrace an English factory, and ensures perfection, by apportioning each person that which his constant practice gives him most power to complete properly. The pipe-makers

F. W. Fairholt, del. & Sc.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

BAZAAR, SIOUT.

exercise much fancy in their art, and are constantly varying their designs. The last novelty was the production of a very large bowl, with wheels on each side moving freely on a pivot, all made in red or black clay: it is not without its merit on the score of utility; for pipe-stems, as used by gentlemen, are generally from four to six feet in length, and they are frequently pushed toward an attendant to be refilled, as the smoker sits on the divan.

The Bazaar is of very great extent—a winding covered way, between well-stocked shops of all kinds, from whence smaller bazaars and open markets branch off on both sides. Ventilation is secured by trap-doors in the wooden roof, constructed so that they may be opened and shut at pleasure, by ropes which regulate them. Plate VIII. is copied from a sketch taken about midway in the place. In the foreground is the shop of a coffee-seller, a most indispensable person in establishments of this kind; for every shopkeeper at once sends to him for coffee, as soon as a customer comes to his shop. A small fire is constantly kept lighted, and the coffee remains hot by standing on the stove. A variety of pots are devoted to its use; the smaller one with the spout

and handle, seen in front of the lower compartment of the stove, in our view, is used for boiling small quantities. The larger pots are used to carry larger quantities to customers. When single cups only are offered in the bazaar, they are brought in the hand. The open wooden rack or cupboard, in the wall above the stove, is used to keep the cups in. The porcelain cups are ranged on one, and the metal cups on another; the latter is generally covered with perforated ornament, which keeps it cool while held in the hand, its use being entirely that of receiving the porcelain cup with the hot coffee, which could not otherwise be held. On the sides of this cupboard, its master has chalked his score against customers whom he has trusted; and beside it are shelves for pipes; these he also supplies them. Some are the *narghileys,* used by the poorer classes, formed simply from a cocoa-nut, made to hold the water through which the smoke is drawn by simple tubes of hollow cane. A superior sort has a glass receptacle for the water, and a long flexible tube for inhaling the smoke; the tobacco is placed in a metal cup on the summit of the water-bottle, and lighted by a piece of charcoal placed upon it, the smoker drawing the smoke downwards through the water, which cools it, going through the long tube to his mouth. The shopkeeper to the left in our view is using one.

This Eastern custom of coffee-drinking and smoking has met with an overdue amount of vituperation from Europeans—always so ready to compound for their own sins by denouncing those of their fellow-men. If we had the common honesty to examine any London street, or take the statistics of any large town, and reckon the number of public-houses, and the quantity of intoxicating liquors drank, to the ruin of bodily and mental energy, we should find Eastern coffee-shops more moral and healthful institutions. We must remember that they take the place of the grog-shop; and we may ask ourselves if the Mohammedan institution is not better than the Christian, and more in the true spirit of Christianity. The quantity of coffee contained in a cup is never more than two table spoonfulls. In the same way tobacco is sparingly used; the pipe contains but a few whiffs, indulged in slowly, the pipe often laid down for a few minutes between each; the tobacco being of fragrant mildest kind.

This is not the place to enter into controversy on tobacco or coffee; very little temper or reason is displayed by their opponents; but it is impossible to speak of Eastern life without noticing these commonest and innocent solaces, left to a much-maligned and oppressed people. The testimony of travellers who have resided among them for a long time, may

be taken in their favour; and among them is no better authority than Lane, who in his notes to the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," observes:—"The practice of drinking wine in private, and by select parties, is far from being uncommon among modern Muslims, though certainly more so than it was before the introduction of tobacco into the East, in the beginning of the seventeenth century of our era; for this herb being in a slight degree exhilirating, and at the same time soothing, and unattended by the injurious effects that result from wine, is a sufficient luxury to many who, without it, would have recourse to intoxicating beverages, merely to pass away hours of idleness." Miss Martineau, with unusual liberality in a lady, acknowledges the utility and comfort of tobacco in the East; and advises all ladies with whom it agrees, to continue the custom in spite of Western prejudices.

Coffee does not now want defenders; but it was once assailed as violently as tobacco, and all sorts of foolish imputations placed to its charge, which would be hardly believed, did they not exist in print to refer to. Homœopathists are now fully aware of its effects on the system; they consider it a curative agent.

Siout is the Lycopolis of the Greeks and Romans, but there are no traces of its ancient state, with the

exception of the tombs on the rock sides which overhang the valley near the modern town. They are of profound antiquity, and well worth the toil of an ascent. Upon the sides of some few are sculptured representations of military and other scenes; others have ornamental enrichments, the apparent originals of the decoration which afterwards became the characteristic of Greek art. Miss Martineau has given their interesting history concisely and well:—"In the pits of these caves were the mummies lying when Cambyses was busy at Thebes, overthrowing the Colossus in the plain. And long after came the upstart Greeks, relating here their personal adventures in India, under their great Alexander, and calling the place Lycopolis, and putting a wolf on the reverse of their local coins. And long after came the Romans, and called Lycopolis the ancient name of the place, and laid the ashes of their dead in some of the caves. And long after came the Christian anchorites, and lived a hermit life in these rock abodes. Among them was John of Lycopolis, who was consulted as an oracle by the Emperor Theodosius, as by many others, from his supposed knowledge of futurity. A favourite eunuch, Eutropius, was sent hither from Constantinople, to learn from the hermit what would be the event of the civil war. I once considered the times of the Emperor Theo-

dosius old times. How modern do they appear on the hill-side at Siout!"

These hermits figure largely in saintly records of the Roman Catholic Church; far away from the haunts of their fellow men they lived a morose life of grim austerity, debarring themselves not only of the simplest comforts, but of the ordinary decencies of life. Half-starved, sometimes diseased, always unwashed and covered with vermin, when nature was at last worn out they died, in what Ribadaneira and Butler call "the odour of sanctity," and ask us to reverence. John of Lycopolis lived in his cell above fifty years, never opening his door or taking any food which required cooking, always carefully abstaining from looking on a female face, and merely opening his window on Saturdays and Sundays to the superstitious crowd who flocked from all quarters to him. The austerities of the saintly hermits of Egypt, their penances in the caves and deserts, are given in sickening details by the authors above named. One of the most famed, St. Anthony, has been a favourite with artists who delight in the wild and monstrous: his temptations have furnished a fertile theme for the most grotesque imaginings, as far from true religious feeling as was the career of these mistaken hermits.

In the pits and caves of this hill-side are many

mummied wolves, which were sacred to Anubis, once the titular deity of the place; from these wolves came the Greek term for the city. The view from this mountain is extremely fine: the picturesque city in the foreground, the winding of the river, the fertile valley, and the varying rocks which bound it, present a *coup d'œil* unrivalled for interest and beauty by any other town on the Nile.

There is an old legend that Siout was the residence of the Holy Family during their sojourn in Egypt. The honour is also claimed for Old Cairo; the decision must depend on caprice, where no evidence can be adduced.

A ride over pleasant plains will again bring us to the port of El Hamra, and our boatmen may again prepare to ascend the stream, rowing to the music of their own voices, according to their invariable custom. Nothing is done by them without song and chorus; and by the time the traveller has reached Minieh, he has been sufficiently familiar with the monotonous chants they never tire in performing. The subjects of these songs are often of the silliest and most uninteresting character, and they have heard them over and over again for years; but a sense of tedium never seems to be felt by any one, for they listen approvingly, evince ever fresh interest, and join in chorus with untiring vigour.

All these songs are sung to a low, monotonous chant, sometimes with a most sentimental air, and with a tremour of voice on certain notes, which is esteemed as a great beauty. One line only is sung by the stroke-oar, when the whole of the rowers join a chorus, which may be meant for admiration or assent, but which exactly resembles the detractive groan uttered by the English at political meetings, to speakers whose sentiments they disapprove. When we started from Boulak, the first song sung was one of good hope for the voyage, and praying that "God give the victory" to its temporary proprietors. This was followed by a love ditty, thus literally translated to me :—

"My love is the flower of Damanhour.
Chorus—Ah-a-a-a!
She has coloured her nails with fresh henna.
Ah-a-a-a!
I waste with my love for that gazelle.
Ah-a-a-a!
She exceeds the rose in sweetness.
Ah-a-a-a!"

It must, however, be noted, that the lady, though possessing every feminine peculiarity, is invariably spoken of in the male gender, as it is considered indelicate to do otherwise. Thus, a gentleman never speaks of his wife before a friend, nor does the most intimate friend allude to her, but in the most distant

tense, or as "the ruler of the house." One of the prettiest songs and tunes was devoted to the *bulbul*, or nightingale, and its love for the rose; and one of the most spirited, to a true native laudation of the Sultan's soldiers in the late Crimean war, wishing all could have seen—

"These lions, when *they* took Sebastopol."

The songs were sometimes varied by pious strains, in which the chorus was altered to "O Mohammed!" or "O Sadi!" Nothing of a serious kind was ever done without an appeal to some sacred name, and in passing any town or place with a local saint, his name was always thus invoked.

Both Lord Nugent and Miss Martineau notice the silly character of many of these songs, and the doleful strain of the tunes to which they are sung. The lady observes:—"We are accustomed to find or make the music which we call spirit-stirring, in the major key; but their spirit-stirring music, set up to encourage them at the oar, is all of the same pathetic character as the most doleful, and only somewhat louder and more rapid. They kept time so admirably, and were so prone to singing, that we longed to teach them to substitute harmony for noise, and meaning for mere sensation. The nonsense that they sing is provoking. When we had grown sad over the

mournful swell of their song, and were ready for any wildness of sentiment, it was vexatious to learn what they were singing about. Once it was 'Put the saddle on the horse; put the saddle on the horse.' And this was all. Sometimes it was 'Pull harder; pull harder.' Another was, 'The bird in the tree sings better than we do.' 'The bird comes down to the river to wash itself.'"

Sometimes, when they are in high spirits, they amuse themselves by concocting extempore songs on each other. As most of them are named Mohammed, Mustapha, Hassan, or Ali, the popular names of the East, answering to our Jack, Tom, and Harry, they distinguish each other by the towns they come from. Thus, one of our men was known as Minieh, where he resided; another, who came from Kous, or Goos, near Negadeh, was familiarly known as Goosey. He was a merry fellow, who did all the "odd jobs" of the crew, and was thus greeted:—

"Goosey washes up our clothes—
Chorus—Oh, Goosey! ah, Goosey!
Boils the pot, to market goes.
Oh, Goosey! ah, Goosey!"

Thus the song continued to enumerate his good qualities, until the theme was exhausted. The Minieh man had his name played upon to suit the jingle of the chorus.

"One of our crew comes from a good town—
Chorus—Ah, Minie*h*! Oh, Minie*ul*!
His features never wear a frown—
Ah, Minie*h*! Oh, Minie*ul*!"

Occasionally the personal allusions were considered so happy and amusing, that an universal roar of laughter greeted the singer, and stopped the rowing for a few minutes; the party who was the subject of the song grinning with a delight perfectly enviable. At night, when the boat was moored, the awning drawn comfortably over the deck, and the frugal supper of lentils and bread ended, it was the delight of these poor simple men to sit in a ring, and listen to their songs, accompanied by a few strains on a reed flute, or taps on the darabooka drum (an earthenware cylinder covered with parchment), to which all kept time by clapping their hands. They were exactly like a lot of happy children—as little like grown men as possible. Their squabbles were merely of a pettish kind, and they "made it up" by kissing and hugging when peace was proclaimed. If one was absent for a day or two, he was embraced by the entire crew on his return.

We may now row leisurely up the river a distance of about twelve miles, without any prominent feature to call for especial remark; at that distance is Abooteeg. Here the whole extent of the cultivated

land may be seen; the Arabian mountains on one side, and the Libyan on the other, are nearly equidistant from the river, leaving a strip of land on each side for cultivation, about five miles in breadth.

Between Abooteeg and Gow, a distance of fifteen miles, rock caves will be noticed on the eastern cliffs. Many contain very old tombs, with subjects from ordinary life depicted on the walls, similar to, and as old as, any in Egypt; they are mixed with others of later date, when the Ptolemies and the Roman emperors were lords of the soil, thus proving the adherence of all to the burial-place consecrated by the usages of many centuries.

Gow is the ancient Antæopolis, the pretended scene of the Greek fable of Hercules and Antæus. There are no remains beyond a few stones, of no interest to the general traveller; the temple of Antæus and the ruins of other buildings have been destroyed by the encroachment of the river, and the abstraction of the stones for the purpose of constructing the governor's palace at Siout.

Tahta is a large town on the western bank, situated in the midst of a fertile plain, with picturesque views of the hills around it. It may be described as an excellent specimen of its class. Plate IX. exhibits some of its principal features. Some of the houses are of a more ambitious altitude

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Vincent Brooks, imp.

TAHTA.

than is usually found in these towns or villages; others are decorated with painted fronts, always in strong positive tints in compartments of geometric form. In the centre of the houses is a *sibeel,* or public fountain, whose welcome waters pour into the roadway. Portions of the walls of a ruined mosque are in the foreground; and in advance of this, along the paths, is a group of tombs, each covered by a plaster superstructure, varying in design, but generally with a group of conical ornaments on the summit. An Egyptian graveyard has often a neglected, ruinous look; the crude brick and plaster tombs crack and decay in the scorching heat; the dusty earth, too, without grass or plants, contrasts unfavourably with the greenness and solemn beauty of the tree-environed and flower-planted cemeteries in Europe.

At Raianeeah, some few miles farther, the river winds considerably, and the eastern mountains come close to the water. The course it takes leaves an isolated sand-bank of nearly a mile in breadth, which is an especial favourite with the water-birds, which flock to it in vast numbers, to bask in the warmth, after feeding in the fields. Pelicans, storks, herons, ducks, and geese, the last by hundreds, completely covered the ground, as our boat approached the spot. It was the most extraordinary

sight of its kind I ever saw, and one that could scarcely be rivalled elsewhere. When a shot from a duck-gun was fired among them it did fearful execution. At this the entire mass took alarm; the different kinds of birds invariably kept together in vast groups, and rose in succession until the sky was filled by their numbers. No one would believe in the quantity here congregated, without ocular proof. To the sportsman no better place could offer itself than the Nile between Beni-Hassan and Esné. The birds begin to disappear about the end of February, and the barrenness of the river is remarkable after that time. There is scarcely a shot, worth talking about, to be had; and you see tens only, where hundreds resorted in December, January, and February.

The mountains now curve inwardly, coming to the water's edge again at Gebel Sheikh Hereede. The curve may be about thirty miles round, and encloses a beautiful green amphitheatral plain, with many villages and antique mounds scattered over it. Advantage has been taken in ancient and modern times to build these villages on natural or artificial elevations; and a reference to the Map of the Nile, in the great French *Description de l'Egypte*, will show how abundantly they dot the plain, and give a quaint and unique character to the spot. It was night when we first passed the high rocks of Sheikh

Hereede, which are piled grandly above the water, and often present bold cliffs to its very edge; the scene was extremely impressive in the bright moonlight, which on our return by day we failed to feel. There is a singular native legend connected with this mountain, and which may be traced back to the most ancient serpent worship of Egypt; it is a belief in the existence of a reptile of the kind, who has made this place his home, and who possesses the miraculous power of curing all diseases. The Danish officer Norden, who visited this place 1737-8, says:—"The Arabs affirm that Sheikh Hereede, having died in this place, was buried here; and that God, by a particular grace, converted him into a serpent that never dies, and who procures the healing of diseases, and bestows favours on all those that implore his aid, and offer him sacrifices." Pococke landed, and visited the Mosque here, in company with the natives, in the year 1743. He describes the Mosque as being like a Sheikh's tomb—a square-domed building, with the tomb of the Sheikh inside, and a cleft in the rock near, from which the miraculous serpent emerged. This tomb was reverently kissed, and sacrifices seem to have been made to the reptile (though the Sheikhs denied it), as blood and entrails of animals were before the door. The creature had resided there "since the time of

Mahomet," and its mere presence cured diseases. For the use of great men it was sometimes taken to their homes; but could only be secured by the hands of a beautiful maiden. If a Christian came near it, it suddenly vanished, but re-appeared in its wonted place in the tomb. The Arabs affirmed its immortality; and that if cut to pieces on the other side of the Nile, it would unite, to be again the presiding genius of this temple of health. Now, its glory has departed! Bayle St. John says,—"The story of the serpent of Sheikh Hereede, seems better known to travellers than it is to the Egyptians. At any rate we did not find any one willing to talk on the subject." The truth is, the people find their superstitions laughed at, and as they are not to be laughed out of them, avoid talking on them altogether.

The mass of rock in front of the river is separated from the main chain by a ravine, and in this dismal cleft is the home of the serpent. I borrow St. John's account, as I did not visit it. He says:—"The tomb, or rather the tombs, for there are two, one opposite the other, partially shaded by a couple of *sont* trees, are little chambers with domed roofs, built against recesses of the rock. The smaller one is said to belong to the son of Sheikh Hereede. The doors were open, the floors covered with mats; but there were no signs of any recent visit. We

took off our shoes and entered. In the recesses of the rock were natural crevices, where we found the sloughs of serpents; but the Arabs who accompanied us, whilst professing to know nothing of the tradition which attributes cures to the crawling guardian-demons of the place, begged us not to touch these cast-off garments. It is curious that the fellahs of Upper Egypt believe that the slough of a serpent is good for sore eyes, and carefully preserve any they may find."

There are ancient caves with sculptures, and quarries in the rock here, from whence the stone was obtained to build the temples that once decorated old Egypt; but they lie wide apart, and the traveller may lose much time and patience in getting to any of interest; for many that look promising from the plain below, are unworthy the toilsome labour of ascending the stony, dusty mountain-side, exposed to the heat of the sun. Unless a proper and trustworthy guide be obtained, much fatigue and unprofitable labour are sure to be incurred; and such a guide is rarely or ever to be had, except in places visited, as a matter of course, by all travellers. A stranger may be frequently led wrong, or to something utterly unworthy a visit, by countrymen, only too glad to gain a few paras as guides, or to lend for a trifle a donkey for the journey. I should say that the

general run of travellers would do well to avoid this antiquity-hunting; the objects when found are chiefly of interest to the Egyptian scholar or student, and not to the general public. Better examples of art than can be found here, may be easily seen at Beni-Hassan, or Thebes.

The sailors are generally glad to pass these mountains with a fair wind; should the wind be adverse, and blow directly in their face, or along their sides, such is the power with which it is condensed, that the boat cannot proceed, but must anchor at the most convenient spot, furl its sail, and wait patiently for a change. It is sometimes a severe tax on patience. For three days it is no unusual thing to be thus blown to a mountain-side, in a most uninteresting part of the river. Very frequently clouds of fine dust are brought in the wind from the desert, which produces the effect of a fog on the distant scene, and fills the cabins of the boat with its particles. Whirlwinds occasionally produce curious effects in lifting heaps of sand high in the air, looking like the smoke of factory chimneys, when seen in the distance.

Near Soohaj, but at some distance on the edge of the desert, stands a very ancient Christian monastery, known as "the White Convent." It is a small walled village, with a very ancient church built from

F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc.

EKHMIM.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

the stones of the older Egyptian temples, and decorated with Byzantine ornament, giving credibility to the old tradition, stating it to have been founded about a hundred and fifty years after the death of the famed Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great. I must refer to Wilkinson's "Handbook to Egypt," for an abundance of interesting details regarding the aspect of this old monastery, and the curious inscriptions here and in the immediate neighbourhood; merely remarking, *en passant*, that while the antiquary and scholar may be gratified here, the ride will repay any visitor who is curious to see an ancient monastic institution devoted to the Christian faith, abounding as this does with sculpture and painting of much interest.

The large and important town of Ekhmim is the next we reach on the eastern bank; it is now close to the stream; but when Pococke visited it, in 1743, he spoke of it as a mile distant therefrom—a very interesting proof of the deviation in the course it has taken. Its appearance from the ordinary landing-place is delineated in Plate X. A large native *dahabeah*, bearing the Turkish flag, occupies the centre of the group of boats; the boatmen are depicted furling the heavy sail, which they do by climbing the yard and tying it thereto. In the front, to the right, is a small fishing boat, the net

floating on gourds. The square towers on the walls, and the pyramidal ones on the bank beyond, giving the town a strongly-fortified appearance, have in reality nothing to do with strategy; they are the houses of pigeons, and seem designed after the fashion of the propylæum of the ancient temples. The old traveller, Norden, speaks of these buildings as having a "noble appearance." We shall find this form of pigeon-tower, like the doum-palm, to be characteristic of the Thebaid and Upper Egypt; the round tower with its fanciful top, as at Golosaneh (page 120), and the conical one, as at Benisouef, Plate III., belong to Lower Egypt; and we shall not meet with such in this upper country. The myriads of pigeons that fly about the towns and villages are surprising to a stranger. Miss Martineau says, "they abound beyond the conception of any traveller who has not seen the pigeon flights of the United States. They do not here, as there, darken the air in an occasional process of migration, breaking down young trees on which they alight, and lying in heaps under the attack of a party of sportsmen; but they flourish everywhere, as the most prolific of birds may do under the especial protection of man. The best idea that a stranger can form of their multitude, is by supposing such a bird population as that of the doves of Venice,

inhabiting the whole land of Egypt." At Bellianeh, higher up the river, a friend, who was a good shot, brought down, without shifting his position from one spot on the banks, upwards of one hundred birds in an hour's time, as they were returning in large flocks to their houses in the evening, from the fields where they had been feeding. The quantity of birds was here so great, that the people did not object to the slaughter, as they generally do in the smaller villages; they even seemed to take an interest in seeing their birds killed, sitting in a mob round the sportsman, and highly delighted when a well-aimed shot brought one instantaneously with a fatal dash upon the ground. The boys vied with each other in rushing into the river after any of the birds that fell into it; and their struggles to secure the prize, frequently ended in the upset of a whole group, the undermost at last emerging half smothered in mud.

Ekhmim was the Panopolis of the Greeks; it is so old that the record of its foundation is lost in the early history of Egypt. Leo Africanus speaks of it as "the oldest city of all Egypt;" even the ancients themselves, as Herodotus and Strabo, allude to its antiquity in their day. Khem, the god of generation, was the Pan and Priapus of the Greeks and Romans. He had a magnificent temple here, of

which some remains exist, and where an inscription has been found, dated in the twelfth year of the reign of the Emperor Trajan, recording its erection to "the very great Deity." It is a singular fact that here, as at Sheikh Hereede, the very ancient superstitions still rule the lower classes in the land. Wilkinson, in noticing this inscribed stone, says that "the natives have ascribed the same properties to it, and to another in the tomb of a female Sheikh, called Bir-el-Abdad, which the statues of the god of generation, the patron deity of Panopolis, were formerly believed to have possessed; and the modern women of Ekhmim, with similar hopes and equal credulity, offer their vows to these relics for a numerous offspring. Many blocks and fragments of statues in other parts of Egypt are supposed to be endowed with the same property; but," he slily adds, "the population of the country is still on the decline."

About three miles further up the river, and on the same side, is the Coptic monastery of which the following woodcut is a view. It stands on a sandy mound, and is encircled by arid cliffs. It is a good specimen of these lonely, prison-like homes of the Christian monks. A high wall completely hides the conventual buildings; the domes of the sacred edifices only appearing above it. One small gate gives ingress to the whole; when this is closed, the

building is at once converted into a fortress sufficiently secure against the attacks of Arabs ; these evil neighbours, with their convenient desert, being close upon them. The double tower and small enclosure in

advance of the gate and walls, is entirely devoted to pigeons, for whose use and breeding it has been especially constructed. A more gloomy home for man it might be difficult to find; Egypt was the chosen place for the self-tormenting ascetics of the early and middle ages,—a class of persons deserving of anything but veneration, although enrolled among "saints." It cannot be too clearly remembered, that they are only saints of man's making, and their claim to the title would be clearly disputed in the present day.

St. George is the patron saint of the Coptic Christians, and his exploit with the dragon is

delineated in very ancient paintings in these churches, as well as upon the temples they converted into churches, as at Dakke in Nubia. It will be remembered that his legendary history lays the scene of the famous encounter in Egypt, and that the lady freed from the monster by his prowess was the daughter of the Sultan of Egypt. The dragon is merely a winged crocodile; and it is somewhat curious that at Mons, in Hainault, where a local knight, Gilles-de-Chin, is reported to have freed the land from a similar pest, the head of the dragon is preserved, as proof positive of the tale; which head is, in reality, the skull of a crocodile.

The picturesque town of Mensheeh is about four miles further up, on the opposite or western bank; it is still more remarkable than Ekhmim for its pigeon-houses, giving the entire town the aspect of a strong fortress. It occupies a commanding situation on a high bank, with a long causeway partially on arches, leading towards it over the low lands, which are entirely submerged in the time of inundation, and correspondingly fertile at all other seasons of the year. The Nile has now washed away all traces of the ancient stone quay, and encroached upon the town itself—a fate reserved for many others on the western bank, which, a century ago, were some distance from the stream.

F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

GIRGEH.

The river scenery is varied and beautiful between this place and Girgeh, the next important town we reach. At the commencement of the last century, it was the capital of Upper Egypt, and the elaboration and costly character of many of its buildings testify to its pristine position. Norden speaks of Girgeh as the capital of the Turks in Upper Egypt, and the bounds of their dominions; for at that time the Arabs were lawless masters in the upper country. Here was formerly one of the largest and most opulent Roman Catholic monasteries in Egypt, and of the most ancient foundation. It was the home of a Coptic bishop; and the brethren of the *propaganda* had a hospital here, in which they maintained themselves by the practice of physic, which made them necessary to the Turks, who, however, treated them with harshness and injustice. The monastery was tenanted by more than two hundred monks. It still exists, but in a decayed condition.

Plate XI. depicts the aspect of this town from the river; it is one of the most striking upon the banks. The varied and fanciful minarets, the tall pigeon towers, the clumps of palm-trees, and the perfect grove of acacias, doum, and date-palms, that environ its walls, give it a peculiar beauty of its own. The quay is generally crowded with boats, as well as with groups of busy people about them. Women washing in

the stream, or filling their water-jars, diversify the scene. The tower to the right, with its three diminishing stories, something like a stunted telescope, is one of a series often met with during the journey from Cairo to Thebes; they were intended as stations for the electric telegraph conductors; but after their completion the line was abandoned and the wire carried more inland. As it crosses the rude Arab huts, and the lonely fields, its tale of modern progress contrasts strangely with the pristine condition of the land it passes over.

Here the boats rest again for bread-baking, and the traveller may well employ a few hours in rambling about the town and admiring the fragments of decorative architecture to be seen in its streets; they will afford abundant employ for the pencil of the sketcher. The bazaar is large, but half unoccupied; the town in general has the look of faded importance: in addition to this, the river is making rapid encroachments yearly, and fast washing it away. It originally extended beyond the entire width of the present bed of the river, which was then some considerable distance from its walls. Now many of the houses are broken down by the fall of the bank sapped by the stream, and a large mosque is partially destroyed: the latter is seen in our view, the apsidal end having been added to close

the opening into its court by the ruin of its walls, and allow an entrance from the river by the steep flight of steps which are doomed to be carried away themselves before many years are past, the inundation of last autumn having done more mischief since this sketch was made.

At the base of the Libyan hills, about twelve miles from Girgeh, are the ruins of Abydus. The traveller may easily procure asses here to take him to the spot; meantime, his boat may follow the winding of the stream, and he can join it at Bellianeh; unless he would save himself an hour's fatigue over a flat and not interesting plain, and start from the latter place, a distance of about eight miles, which may be comfortably travelled in two hours. These ruins have supplied our National Museum with one of the most remarkable monuments of ancient Egypt possessed by that or any other collection. This is the far-famed "tablet of Abydus," a chronological series of names of early Egyptian monarchs, ending with that of Rameses the Great (B.C. 1311—1245), by whose orders it was executed. It is, unfortunately, only a fragment, but it carries back this official list to the early period of 2082 years before Christ, and aids in clarifying and confirming those given by Manetho and the early historians. It was first noticed in 1818, by

Mr. Bankes, and four years afterwards M. Caillaud examined and drew it for Champollion, who published it. The French consul in Egypt, M. Meinaut, now fully alive to its interest, removed it from the ruins, and carried it to Paris on his retirement from the East. At his sale, in 1837, the French Museum failed to secure it—an act the more remarkable, as it seemed so peculiarly to belong to the country whose *savans* had done so much in disseminating its knowledge. The hammer of the auctioneer gave it to England at the cost of £500; a large sum, for a few hieroglyphics; but no fixed money-value can be placed on objects unique as this is.

It was found in the *débris* of the small temple of Osiris, some short distance to the north of the larger temple. There is little remaining of this famed building but a few feet of wall above the foundation, and that reached by excavating the sand which has buried the original surface of the ground at least thirty feet. This place rivalled the island of Philæ, for it was also asserted to be the burial-place of Osiris. Here the greatest god of the Egyptian Pantheon had the most splendid and beautiful of temples constructed to his honour. It was lined with alabaster, its walls covered with painting and sculpture. Its pristine beauty may be guessed at, from the fragments we now see; the pure white of the

F. W. Fairholt, del. et. Sc.

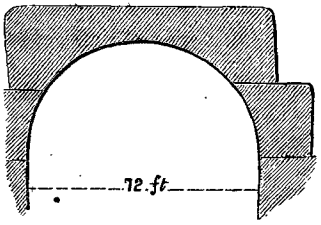
Vincent Brooks, Imp.

ABYDUS.

surface, and the brilliant manner in which the details are painted—the hieroglyphic inscriptions being richly coloured also—testify to the costly beauty of this famed shrine. When furnished with all the sacerdotal paraphernalia of the ancient faith, and crowded by richly-dressed priests, attendants, king, and people, how striking must have been the sacred ceremonies under the pure bright sunlight—itself typical of the god. There is nothing in Egypt purer in taste, or more indicative of refined splendour, than this small fragment of a solemn fane.

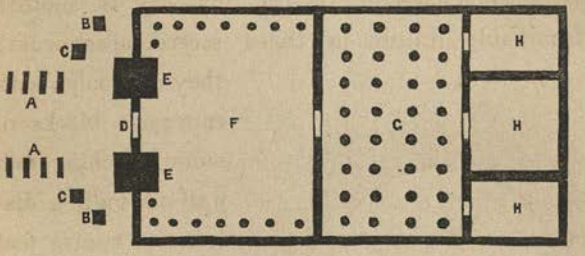
The great temple near it is half buried in sand, which has covered even the roof of the great hall, as shown in Plate XII. Into this you descend by a sloping excavation. The pillars are of very ancient form, the sculptures boldly and beautifully executed, particularly the hieroglyphic inscriptions, which in some instances are unusually large. The enormous blocks of sandstone stretching from pillar to pillar, and forming the roof, are decorated with the winged sun. Some of the ponderous slabs which rest on these pillars have sunk, and are only kept partially in their places by the earth and sand massed in the course of ages about them. From this hall the sanctuaries are entered. The doors of two of them may be seen to the right in our view; they are elaborately sculptured over their entire surface. All

are characterised by delicacy and grace of execution; the traces of colour throughout the ruins are very perfect. There are four chambers, each with an arched roof, decorated all over its surface with a series of cartouches containing the name of Sethi, the father of Rameses the Great, who commenced this temple. These cartouches are arranged in lines with a star between each, a mode of making them subserve as decoration peculiar to this place. The cyclopean character of the masonry is another remarkable feature in these sacred apartments; they are roofed with enormous blocks of stone, reaching from wall to wall, a distance of twelve feet asunder, the arch being cut out of the solid mass, as shown in the section here engraved. Nothing can more forcibly display the great mechanical power at the command of the ancient masons.



As this is the first great temple the visitor meets with in his upward course of the river, and as its present condition renders the comprehension of its original design anything but clear—indeed, exceed-

ingly perplexing before obtaining the experience of others more perfect, it will be well to give here a plan of these sacred edifices, particularly as they had a general resemblance throughout the land, varying only according to size and minor details, but preserving essential features, as do the religious buildings of all times and countries. A large piece of ground was enclosed by a wall of brick, the temple



occupying the centre. The space between was sometimes planted with trees, and is the sacred grove alluded to by the scriptural writers. Long avenues of sphinxes (A A in the plan) lined the way to the temple; some fine examples remain at Karnac. In front of the principal gate were seated colossal statues of the king (B B), and obelisks inscribed with dedicatory inscriptions (C C), as at Luxor. The gate of entry (D) was flanked by two pyramidal towers (E E), generally of enormous proportions, covered with

historic sculpture, as at Luxor, or representations of their royal builders sacrificing to the gods, as at Edfou. This gave entry to a large open court, with a portico supported by pillars around it (F); crossing this a covered hall (G) was entered, the roof supported by rows of thickly-planted columns; screens reaching half-way up these pillars parted the hall from the open court, or the sanctuaries (H H) beyond; the latter were sometimes separated by a transverse ante-room, or passage.

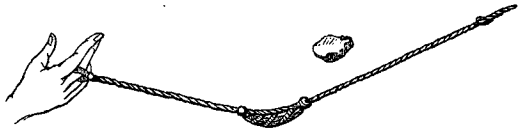
There is an extensive series of tombs in the hills near this once-renowned city, which in size and importance rivalled the capitals of Upper and Lower Egypt at Thebes and Memphis. Plutarch states that the ancient Egyptians were particularly anxious to be interred at Abydus, where Osiris was believed to be buried. This assertion of that author is fully borne out by the inscriptions found in these graves, which tell us that the mummies within them were brought there from long distances.

The modern Abydus is a very straggling town, being in fact a series of groups of houses, built on the high ridge of sand formed by the *débris* of the Libyan hills, or the drift from the desert which has buried the older ruins. It is unpicturesque and uninviting, the glaring sun unshaded by the ordinary palm-trees.

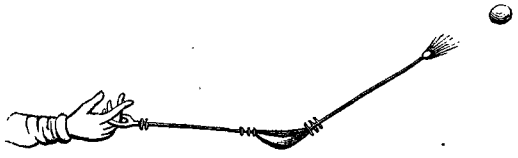
The ride to Bellianeh from hence is through a

singularly fertile plain. The distance is most deceptive, as usual, owing to the flatness of the land and clearness of the air. You fancy that half-an-hour's ride is all that will be necessary to reach its boundary at the river, but it occupies more than two hours to do this. The plain was covered, when the author crossed it, with the temporary sheds of reeds in which the shepherds live for four months of the winter season, while their flocks graze. Many goats were rambling about—a most ugly breed, with high-ridged noses and great flapping ears; the sheep were all dark-coloured—brown or black—with a very thick coarse wool. Over the entire plain the position of the villages can be detected by the groups of palm-trees which protect them. The richest crops covered the plains, the lentils and barley were ripening, and very many men and boys were employed in slinging stones at the wild birds, to stop their depredations. Each sling was formed from thick cords, knitted together by the peasants. It was held by a loop passed round the second finger of the right hand, as shown in the cut; the mesh which held the stone was of cord also, and a second cord was attached to the opposite side of it; the end of this cord was held in the hand when the sling was charged with a stone. When this stone was about to be cast forth, the sling was whirled two or three times round the head, and

then this second unlooped cord was allowed to fly forward with the stone in the manner displayed in the engraving. In this land of unchanging customs,



where the simple implements of peasant life alter even less than other things, there can be little doubt that these slings are of the same form and make as were used by David; and in looking at the shepherd boy using this, in his simple dress—a loose wide-sleeved shirt of coarse brown stuff—it seemed to require no great stretch of imagination to fancy we looked on David himself, who must have presented just such a figure as do these *fellah* boys.



Our Anglo-Saxon forefathers used a sling of precisely similar make, as may be seen in the above woodcut, copied from a drawing in a translation of

the Pentateuch, written and illuminated in the tenth century by Ælfricus, abbot of Malmesbury, at the desire of Æthelward, an illustrious ealderman. It is now preserved in the British Museum among the Cottonian manuscripts, and press-marked "Claudius, B. iv." In the original drawing the slinger is aiming at a bird upon the wing.

Our English farmers, and agriculturists generally, are noted for "grumbling;" but the condition of the Egyptian farmers is the worst of any. It is hard work for them to pay their way and secure any profit for their labour, notwithstanding the natural goodness of the soil they cultivate. The ravages committed by birds, in so confined a district as the valley of the Nile, must be very great: every village abounds in pigeons, enormous flocks of wild birds settle on the crops; they are liable to swarms of locusts; and all persons seem to think it right to help themselves in the unfenced fields, the sailors regularly stealing laps full of beans, or green stuff, whenever they could get on shore. When "tracking" or pulling the boat by the rope, they would gather handfuls of the tender leaves of these plants, and eat them, like cattle do, as they walked along. The sugar-plantations of course fared the worst, and canes were dragged up by the roots and cut to pieces with the avidity of hungry gourmands. When the farmer has secured

his crop, he has then to contend with the government, which screws taxes out of his profits without mercy or justice, and compels him to find labourers for all public works. His must literally be the life of "a toad under a harrow."

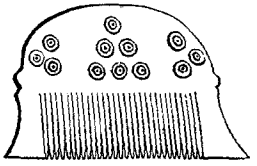
Bellianeh is a large town, thickly surrounded with trees. A large market was held under a plantation of palms, to the south of the houses, when our boat anchored there. Markets and fairs are invariably the best places to gather ideas on the tastes and habits of the people. The country folks came from long distances, as well to sell as to purchase; the goods were all displayed upon the ground; the most curious were the wares of the travelling pedlars, who carried a large quantity of cheap finery for women. However poor they are in Egypt, they will have an abundance of necklaces, finger-rings, bracelets, and anklets. The heavy jewellery for richer persons would be formed in gold or silver; it is formed for the use of the poorer classes in copper. The most curious ornaments are the neck-rings and bracelets, which are made precisely in the same way as they were in the Roman era, and similar in manipulation—even to the welding of their twisted wires—to those found in the British Islands and in Gaul. A drawing of one of these modern Egyptian works might pass for a copy of an antique. Curiously enough, the

name for the neck-ring is *tock*, an evident corruption of the *torque* of classic times. Many of the bracelets are made of coloured glass, the hand being curved in passing it through. The gold and silver bracelets worn by the better class are sufficiently elastic to save the pain or trouble of thus squeezing the hand; and sometimes gold is used so pure that it bends as easily as if it were lead. The finger-rings at this fair were the rudest and cheapest jewels to be bought, and might be had for somewhat less than an English halfpenny each; they were cast in lead, and bits of glass of various bright colours took the place of jewels. Ear-rings of various forms are made from thin plates of gilt copper, the decoration roughly stamped in a die, and the whole trimmed into shape and soldered as coarsely as possible; some of them are formed in imitation of coin, and hang in bunches from twisted wire decorated with blue and red glass beads. Strings of glass beads, many of really elegant design and workmanship, are also worn, but are more expensive, being sold at so much per bead; they are importations from Venice, whose works in the sixteenth century outshone all others, and have never been surpassed; their celebrity in the East has ensured a large trade up to the present time. To this large "wealth of jewels," which the poorest wear, is now often added the nose-ring, sometimes of

gold, but most generally of brass, with two or three red earthen beads upon it. I made a sketch of an elderly woman who dispensed with the face-veil, and was abundantly supplied with all these articles of ornament, the intrinsic value of the whole being under five shillings, and the real cost not much above double that sum. They have a general fondness for pendent ornament: the earrings have small circular plates like spangles hanging to their lower edge; the finger-rings also have small rough pearls or beads appended to that part which appears when worn on the back of the hand. The anklets worn by children are of brass wire, to which little bells are attached to jingle as they run—an ingenious device by which they may be kept within hearing, and be prevented from straying into danger.

These stall-keepers also exhibit knives of the most primitive rudeness, with blades as if formed from iron hoops, in handles of rough wood or common bone; the latter remarkable for exhibiting the concentric ring ornament so common in Byzantine work, and so frequently seen in Anglo-Saxon relics.

Combs made from rough ebony, imported from Mecca, are often ornamented thus, by dies dipped in a silver wash, which leaves a glittering, but very fragile decoration. We engrave a specimen, its contour closely resembling those found in late Roman and early Christian tumuli, in all parts of Europe. The looking-glasses produced by these wandering dealers are perfect curiosities of badness, the frames enriched by the commonest coloured glass or gilt paper. In fact, all the articles they produce are about on a par with the cheap toys that used to be manufactured fifty years ago for our children, or the gilt gingerbread that still rejoices them at country fairs.



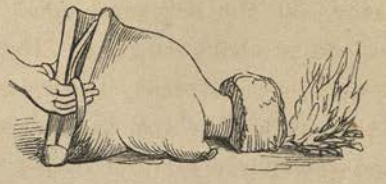
The shoe-sellers keep to the traditional taste for red and yellow leather, and the peaked upturned toe, which to us looks absurd, is in truth very wisely fitted for native use, inasmuch as it does not dig into and throw up dust, as our flat-toed shoes do. After a very short experience, the author found the great advantage of adopting them, which he gladly persevered in until he left Alexandria for home: the ease and coolness they give to the foot, owing to their sensible shape and general construction, cannot be

claimed for the European article. Indeed, in the hat and shoe worn so universally by Western and Northern nations, these peoples have made a misery for themselves, which has also the curious disadvantage of being the ugliest human inventions (for the head assuredly) that have ever been adopted since the world began. The thickly-folded turban that appears to load the head unnecessarily, and would overheat it in Europe, in reality keeps it cool in the East, repelling the heat of the sun, and being a better protection from a *coup de soleil* the thicker and more voluminous its folds are made. The head itself is closely shaved—an obvious advantage when the turban is removed. The beard is carefully tended, and is most valuable, as it keeps up an equable temperature about the face where it requires most protection from sun. No one fully understands the true use of the beard who has not journeyed in the East.

This fair, like all primitive ones, was largely used for the sale of useful articles: cloth of all kinds and adjuncts to dress of course appeared; grain of every description, sugar in cane and loaf (the latter coarse and quite brown), and butcher's meat. The buffaloes, goats, and sheep were driven in alive, sold, and slaughtered on the spot. A particularly fine sheep was bought as *backsheesh* for our crew, at the cost of fourteen shillings English, and was remarkable for

an enormously fat tail, looked upon by gourmands with delight. When a buffalo is killed, the butcher and attendants set to work immediately afterwards beating it with heavy sticks to make it tender (but which never effects that desirable end); it is then cut up for sale, sometimes into very small pieces, and so made into lots, from whence *kibabs* are cooked—they are small cubes of flesh stuck in a long row on skewers, and roasted over a charcoal fire. This process of subdivision is effected in a true Eastern style of *nonchalance*. We saw one butcher cutting up his pieces, and securing the general lump as he did so, by holding it with his left hand and his teeth. In another place a donkey-barber was busily employed trimming various animals; they clip the legs, particularly the hinder ones, above the knee into horizontal and diagonal lines, produced by cutting the hair close to the skin. In Plate VIII. the animal in the foreground is thus decorated. One of the most curious sights was a travelling blacksmith, who had *improvised* a forge; his fire was blown by a bellows worked by his wife, and formed from a kid-skin, the hinder part secured to two parallel sticks of wood; a spring, also of wood, between them, allowed the skin to be inflated according to the will of the blower, whose hand (secured in side loops) passed across the front, and directed the blast

through the neck of the skin; that being fixed in a mound of earth in front of the fire which was made in a hole in the ground.



An act of summary justice was done to a small colony of very brazen dancing girls, on the morning following our arrival, who had located themselves close by the coffee-shops, opposite the boats. Some years ago, they had run riot in Cairo to such a degree, that they were banished beyond Thebes, and took up their general abode at Esné, a place that became infamous in consequence. Now they are dropping down the river again,—some few, of a low kind, may be seen in the streets of Cairo; and others, who dance in private houses, are "winked at;" but they are common enough in the large towns, at and above Minieh. The Bellianeh girls were smoking and drinking with the men the day before, and paid no customary respect to the local governor as he passed. He was most irate in consequence, and on the first opportunity he sent a detachment of

soldiers and labourers, who gave them a sudden and early call, turned them all out of doors, and then out of the town; finishing their labour by pulling down the entire group of houses they inhabited—which being, like the rest, mere mud hovels, were all cleared off in about an hour. The larger jars and pans used in the kitchen, which were too cumbrous to take in their flight, were smashed up. Thus a wide and ugly gap in the town, and a heap of mud walls and potsherds, were all that told of the "gay place" of the previous day.

The outskirts of the town had a wild, deserted look this same morning, for the fair was over, and the ground strewed with its waste: it was possessed by groups of dogs and vultures, picking up bones and scraps, and occasionally disputing for their possession; while smaller birds of prey watched the chance to secure a share for themselves. These creatures are the scavengers of Egypt, and disgusting as they may occasionally appear, perform important and useful offices; so that, in return, their lives are respected, and they enjoy immunity from persecution.

Crocodiles become more common now; they repose in the sun on the sandy islets left in the shallow parts of the river, sometimes many together, rarely singly. We saw one at least sixteen feet long, and

a small one beside it, at a turn of the river; but they both disappeared beneath the water as the boat came fully in their sight. Birds are also abundant here: one day's shooting bagged eighty-three geese and seven ducks.

There is little to notice in the towns or villages between Bellianeh and Keneh, although the distance is more than sixty miles. Farshoot, Bajorah, and How, present no features for especial remark. Behind the latter are some very old tombs with paintings, but not worth the general visitor's while to go to. Some large islands diversify the scenery. The river winds hereabout very much, and the patience of the traveller may be again severely tested by the hindrance of winds, which, if they blow at all, are sure to be adverse in some part of the course. We did not accomplish three miles in as many hours, with all hands at the oars; the wind, too, brought with it a perfect fog of sand, which filled eyes and nose, and penetrated all the cabins. The cliffs again approach the river at a short distance further on, and are part of the range on the eastern bank known as the Jebel Mooneh. From a lonely, bleak bank opposite, the boat was loudly hailed by a man who, with very little ceremony, called on us to stop and send ashore money or food to a certain "holy man," whose servant he was, and

who has lived for more than a quarter of a century in a sort of hole excavated near this spot, sheltered only by a screen of reeds. He has two attendants, one employed in fetching what he requires as food, and as a general servant; the other as a watch upon the river. The boatmen firmly believe that mischief is sure to happen to boat and crew, should they pass the spot and leave him unheeded. They described him as very old, with a long white beard; he never wears clothes, performs any ablution, or leaves the hole he has chosen to reside in. His name is Sheikh Selim, and he started in life as the attendant to a village mosque. A friend who visited him, in company with his boat's crew, describes his appearance as that of an over-fed, scrofulous creature, with a stomach swelled, and legs attenuated by his indolent life; very filthy, but worshipped by the boatmen, who considered it a blessing to be allowed to approach or touch him, kneeling, kissing his hands, and bowing their foreheads to the dust before him. They are persuaded that the hyenas play about him at night, as friends and protectors rather than enemies; and that the crocodiles smell at him and retreat (for which other reasons than his sanctity might be adduced). The extraordinary part of his deception is, that he has never been known to pray, or go through any religious forms, as is usual with

such professors; and when asked to do so for these visitors, he replied that it was needless, for they were all good men. In fact, none had come empty-handed, and all were satisfied with his words, because they believe that he is entranced every night, when he appears to be in his natural sleep; and that his soul then travels to Mecca, and intercedes for them, performing at the same time the due religious ceremonies.

Such is a living instance of what the anchorites and saints were in the early stages of Christianity in Egypt. If those who respect them in "legendary lore" could see them as we see this Sheikh, their reverence would possibly be less. The people here say that when he dies the square building, with its cupola, which indicates the burial-place of a saint, will be placed over his tomb, and he may be invoked, as are others on the Nile, by the boatmen in time of danger.

Bayle St. John remarks that "the number of persons who in every generation acquire a reputation for sanctity in Egypt is very great. Scarcely a village fails to produce, from time to time, a holy man, who utterly displaces his predecessor, and having gathered a tribute of solid respect during his lifetime, contrives to attract empty homage to his tomb after death. At length some other wise

individual, having awakened to the profits of piety, follows his example; and thus the succession of objects of veneration is kept up. Sheer imbecility is sometimes a sufficient title to respect in the eyes of these poor barbarians, who, however, may be more prudent than we think them, and may be instinctively aware of the inconvenience of having saints too clever. The sacred idiots of Egypt, who often affect the folly which has not been vouchsafed them, are but moderately exacting in their claims. They are content to be hardly so well dressed as the lilies of the field, provided they be required neither to toil nor to spin. Many of them, indeed, go about naked as Adam before the fall. Their cells are anything but palaces. All they require, indeed, is to be fed in idleness, and allowed to spend their lives in a state of contemplative beatitude."

The long reaches of the river from this point present no new features to descant upon. Indeed, the cliffs and picturesque details of the river, repeat themselves as much as the flatter scenery of the lower land; and it seems most surprising how any travellers can assert that the Nile is *not* monotonous. I fearlessly assert, after having been up and down the principal European streams—the Rhine, the Rhone, the Saone, the Marne, the Meuse, the Moselle, and the Danube—that any of these would gain largely

by a comparison. Nay, our own Thames, between Oxford and Windsor, has more elements of the picturesque than the Nile possesses.

Dishné is situated on one of these long reaches. Norden says the name expresses "admiration, or amazement, because the Arabs who went up the Nile, here found themselves at a loss to know on which side they should turn when they would pray," for, owing to the elbow of the river, the sun appeared to be on the opposite bank to that upon which he rose elsewhere.

In about six hours we reach Keneh, distant a mile from the stream, and approached across a waste of soft sand. It is a large town, and of much importance, carrying on an extensive trade with Arabia; being the high road to Cosseir on the Red Sea, and the route taken by caravans to Mecca. The finest dates in Egypt may be purchased here; they are carefully selected, and packed in drums, varying in price according to quality; the darkest kind are the dearest, and very much the best; they are more like a soft preserve than a natural vegetable growth, and are from the renowned gardens of Ibreem. The native dates of Egypt are dry, stringy, and bad.

The governor's palace is passed as we go this way to the town. It covers a large surface with its straggling and varied buildings for the numerous

dependants, rendered necessary by Oriental ideas of position. We had occasion to make an early acquaintance with the interior and its master, Falil Pasha, owing to the sudden incarceration of one of our crew. The event was so very characteristic of Egyptian life, in its governmental as well as social state, as to be worth relation. When we had anchored on the previous evening, this sailor, who had been marked on the conscript list by the Sheikh of the village near this town, in which his family lived, went on shore to pay them a visit, when he heard that they were arrested as hostages for himself. He at once went to the place of their confinement in the town, and was speedily locked up with them. Nothing would give this innocent family liberty but a sacrifice of their son (whose wages was their principal dependence) to the hated ranks of the army. As a last resource, he begged our interference, on which he had full dependence, and not without reason; for the Pasha received us most courteously, and, after reprimanding the man for the removal of his front upper teeth (an evident trick to prevent his utility as a soldier, by rendering it impossible for him to bite a cartridge, but which the sailor declared had been done by his mother in his infancy), he ended by saying it was a difficult case to decide, but that he had a firman from the Sultan,

authorising him to grant every facility to travellers and their servants; he would, consequently, give him a release. A secretary prepared the necessary document, which was rendered valid by an impression of the Pasha's seal; this he carried in his girdle attached by a silver chain, the surface being first rubbed with a viscid ink, when it was stamped on the paper. The question was thus settled as a favour, not as a right; the merits of the case either way did not effect the decision; and it is this uncertainty in plain justice, and this dependence on extraneous influences of all kinds, that make mere honesty so little cared for in Egypt.

Business over, the Pasha regaled us with pipes and coffee—the established routine of Egyptian hospitality; hence the serving of both is ostentatious, and the paraphernalia the most expensive in housekeeping. Furniture they have none, beyond a small table or stool; the cushioned divan occupying the sides of a reception-room, and taking the place of our chairs and sofas; tables are only brought in for meals, and the heavy amount of furniture and *bijouterie* which crowd our rooms is utterly unknown. Hence the lavish cost of coffee-services and pipes, that being the way in which the rich display their wealth to visitors. The coffee was served by two attendants, one bearing the coffee-pot, placed in a

receptacle hanging by three chains attached to a ring held in the hand, and somewhat resembling the censers of the Roman Catholic Church; this holds a small quantity of charcoal to keep the pot heated. The second attendant carried the tray with the cups of china, each in its metal stand. The entire service (except the porcelain cups) was of gold filagree, of the most elaborate and beautiful design. The Maltese are famous for work of this kind, and many of them, as well as French jewellers, reside at Cairo in constant employ, though much of this work is imported. Sometimes the cups are richly enamelled, and manufactured to order in Paris. I saw some which had been made there, a curious mixture of French and Egyptian tastes. The bottom of the metal cup was filled up with minute machinery like a musical snuff-box, which was set playing by turning the foot below it: thus melody could be luxuriously enjoyed while sipping coffee, which is often scented by ambergris.

The pipes we used were six feet in length, the stems of light jasmine wood covered with silk, and overlaid with woven threads of gold and silver; a thin veil of pink gauze protected this from being too readily soiled by an heated hand, without hiding the decoration. The mouthpieces were very large, of the finest amber, and the juncture with the stem

secured by a golden ring thickly set with diamonds. The bowl of the pipe is sometimes cut from a rare stone; but if made of the favourite red earth, it is always richly gilt, and rests in an enamelled dish placed upon the floor. The Moors are celebrated for this manufacture of metal-work, which often displays much vigorous fancy in design and gorgeousness of colour.

The establishment boasted numerous dependants. The chief huntsman was introduced, and the narration of recent feats on the hills with wild animals, and on the river with crocodiles, was practically illustrated by the stuffed skins of hyenas, jackals, and the great river pest. One of the crocodiles, killed but a few days before, measured ten feet in length. The difficulty of getting near enough to hit them is considerable, and when a shot does penetrate, it is not often fatal immediately, as the creature sinks into the water, and crawls long distances to die; hence to kill and secure a victim of this kind is no easy task.

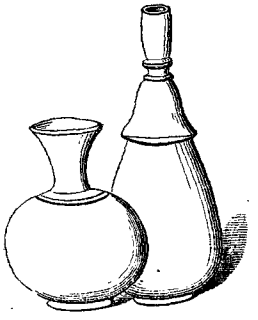
In the courtyard, the Pasha's hawkers were seated with their birds on perches, awaiting his orders. All around groups of other attendants or of soldiers gave life to the scene. Long ranges of building told of their large numbers. Much of this building had the half-ruinous look characteristic of the slight, ill-finished architecture which now prevails in the

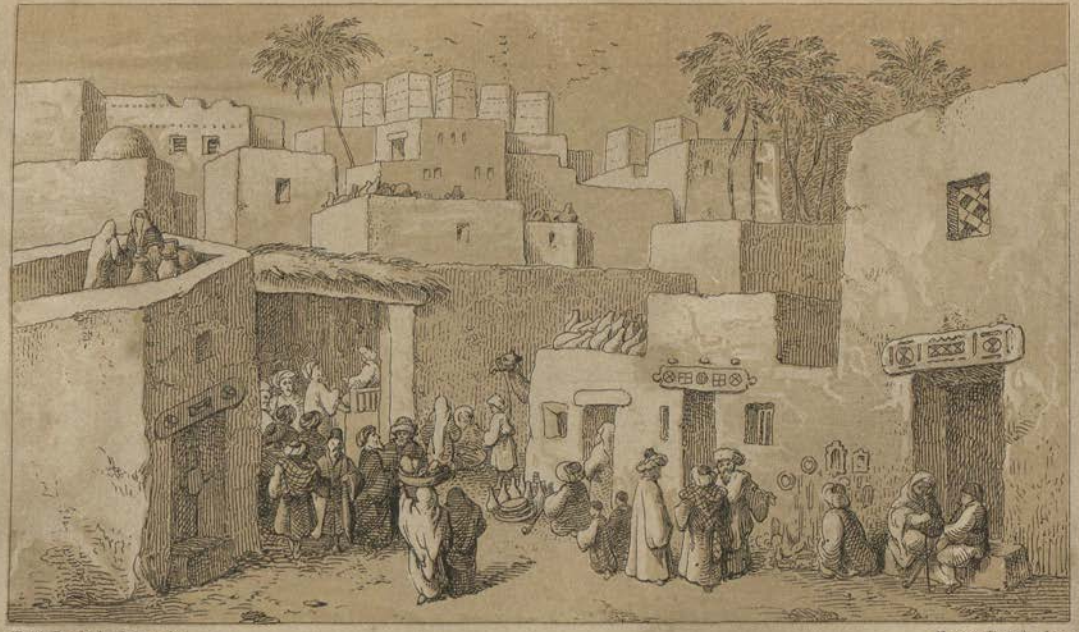
East, with its imitative enrichment executed in distemper colour on walls of whitewash, as if copied from a French *café chantant*.

The town itself, unlike Girgeh, has no fine architectural features; it is a great assemblage of dusty streets and mud houses. The mosques are unpretending in style, and unworthy visiting. Near the Pasha's palace is a very large inn, used by the pilgrims as a meeting and resting-place on the annual excursions to Mecca. It is generally used as a coffee-shop; but that occupies only a small part of the vast building. It has the plainest accommodation possible for visitors, who seat themselves on the ground, or on low stools made of a bamboo framework. The walls of the building are of mud, the roof formed by laying palm-stems across and covering them with the branches or matting; heavy piers of crude brick help to support this roof; between them are divans of brick also coated with clay, upon which the guests sleep on a mat, wrapping themselves in their own clothes. Outside are large enclosures for cattle. The ordinary announcement of our village inns, "Good entertainment for man and beast," could never apply here, for anything more dirty and dismally uncomfortable could not be invented. A complete colony of over-dressed brazen dancing-girls are in immediate contiguity, and report

speaks of a prosperous trade they have with the pilgrims bound on their pious errand, who willingly add a few extra sins to the load they carry to part with for ever at Mecca. The great temple of Dendera, on the opposite shore, was early dedicated to Athor, the Egyptian Venus; and it has been shrewdly remarked that her rites have never been neglected, during all changes of peoples and their faith, in the neighbourhood originally devoted to her worship.

In the lane leading thence to the great bazaar I sketched the view engraved on Plate XIII., as an excellent specimen of the general aspect of the interior of an Egyptian town. In the foreground, to the right, is a tobacconist's shop; on the dead wall near it an itinerant pedlar has displayed his wares, consisting of women's trinkets, looking-glasses, cutlery, and minor articles of use or ornament, spreading the smaller ones on the ground beside him. Beyond, at the corner of a lane, lives a dealer in the *goolehs*, or porous water-bottles so constantly used in Egypt; their general form is displayed in our cut. This town is celebrated for





F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

ENTRANCE TO BAZAAR, KENEH

their manufacture; it is the staple trade, and hence they are carried to all the others, where they are sold. The clay used in their fabrication is obtained from the bed of a mountain stream in the neighbourhood; it is mixed with the ashes of the *halfeh*, or coarse reedy desert grass. The jars are formed on the potter's wheel from the lump of clay thus prepared, with the assistance only of a small piece of metal to trim them; the potter's hand and eye enabling him to do the rest with such rapidity, that more than fifty may be made by a clever workman in an hour. They are very cheap, but very fragile; the least collision injures or destroys them; hence the immense quantity of potsherds in the vicinity of all towns. The top of this house, it will be perceived, is used as a store for jars; that of the house to the right has a range of oil-jars, which women are examining. The door roof-tree, with its carving, will be noticed on all these houses, as well as the simple construction of the windows, consisting of an open square, across which bricks are laid diagonally resting on each other, with open spaces between. The house-tops are always made storing-places for such articles as the rooms could not conveniently contain. In the distance is a group of pigeon-towers, and here and there from the court-yards of houses the date-palm rears its tufted head.

In the centre of the view is the entry to the bazaar, rendered purposely gloomy by the roof of palm-tree stems and leaves, but which is gay and cheerful enough within, for there is a constant trade or a constant gossip going on, pipes always alight, and coffee always being carried about for customers. The cooking department is fragrant with fried fish and broiled *kibabs,* while pans of hot lentils, and queer unknown messes of pickled and raw vegetables, abound. A clatter and hubbub, a pushing and squeezing of men and beasts, rival our Fleet Street in confusion, and there is nothing *slow* here but the mode of conducting serious business.

A *moolid,* or annual commemoration of a local saint, was being held here when we were present, which added to the activity and gaiety of the place. We were advised to stay and see this, which, as the wind was against us, and a favourable chance presented for seeing something more of the manners and customs of the people than is ordinarily displayed, we readily acceded to. What we did see shall be narrated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

KENEH TO THEBES.

"HASSAN make great illumination; for you let him go see the saint." Such was the Egyptian English which was given in explanation of certain antics expressive of rude joy, which one of our Nile boatmen indulged in when we stopped at Keneh, and gave permission to a few of the men to visit a sort of "Holy Fair," held for three days in the town, in honour of a local saint buried in its cemetery. The explanation was to me little less clear than the man's pantomime; and I had therefore to seek an interpretation of it. The "great illumination" puzzled me, but I ultimately found that the custom of hanging out oil lamps, on all occasions of rejoicing at Alexandria, Cairo, and the principal towns on the Nile, was used to indicate the mental emotions it was supposed to typify; and that our boatman was "greatly rejoiced."

This curious singleness of meaning, associated with a given word, was further experienced on another occasion: when the wild ducks kept aloof, and a shot at them was unattainable, we were told they were "very much *ashamed*" that morning. The word had been adopted in the sense of *shyness*, and hence its ludicrous application.

There is still another bit of the brief speech of our interpreter, which wants explanation; and that is the phrase, "seeing the saint," which simply meant, visiting his mosque and tomb, doing a certain amount of religious service, and then indulging in the fun of the fair.

We had experienced a hot and wearisome day on the Nile, and when night came with its welcome coolness, there was a beauty in its calm peculiar to the country. The heavy groves of date and doum palms swung solemnly in the breeze; the Lybian hills were piled in more fantastic forms than elsewhere on the opposite shore; and below them, half buried in the sand, was the far-famed Temple of Dendera. The intense blueness of the sky was relieved by a moon almost golden with light, and myriads of stars brilliantly clear. We decided on "seeing the saint" also, as the ride would be so pleasant, and the escort necessary would give many more of our crew a share in the pleasure, which they envied their companions

who had already started. Dragoman, captain, and crew bestirred themselves to get ready with a haste unusual to Egyptians; and in the course of an hour donkeys were obtained from the town, and the whole cavalcade was in marching order.

This constant allusion to donkey-riding, we have elsewhere explained. The breed has always been famous in Egypt, and deservedly so, to the present time; the noble description, in Job, of the wild ass, can scarcely be appreciated by those who only know the miserable western breed, and have not seen these docile, strong, and useful creatures in the East. They are to be preferred to the horses which may occasionally be obtained, and which are as inferior to them as they are among ourselves to horses. The traveller should provide himself with a good saddle in Cairo, as the country ones are generally old and uncomfortable, and sometimes not to be had at all.

The ride across the plain in the still moonlight, when no footfall could be heard on the soft sand, must have given a ghost-like appearance to our party, as the lanterns flickered near us, and occasionally gleamed on the group. The loneliness of the dusty alleys, where only a few wretched dogs crouched and growled in corners, was succeeded by a gayer scene as we reached the main street leading to the bazaar. There some business seemed doing;

many of the shops were open. The best trade was done, as usual, at the coffee-shops, in front of which many groups of musicians were seated, playing most vilely on instruments called, by courtesy, musical, consisting of a drum, tambourine, reed-flute, and *rabab*, or small violin, which emitted only a few unpleasant notes. The cook-shops also showed signs of activity; and the *kibabs*, fried fish, and extraordinary conglomerates of vegetables in which the people delight, were busy preparing for their delectation. Groups of dancing-girls stood at the doors, in the lanes leading from the bazaar, with lights gleaming from the open doors of their mud cabins; with boisterous jocularity, giving invitation to all passers-by. The sides of the lanes stretching towards the outskirts of the town, were lined with temporary stalls of dealers, who had brought their wares from long distances for sale here. They were lighted by hanging lamps, and comprised an extensive variety of utilities, as well as luxuries. Thus some were devoted to the sale of grain of all kinds; others to bread and cakes; others to silks and ordinary stuffs—in fact, this fair resembled those held in the middle ages in our own country, when intercommunication was difficult between towns and villages, and a fair was a necessary aggregate of the general produce of a country, brought together on special

occasions for the use of a particular locality, whose inhabitants took that opportunity to supply themselves with household stock. The occurrence of some saintly festival was generally fixed upon as a time for holding it, as was the case with this present one.

Emerging into the open land at the outskirts of the town, a line of dark shady trees led to a bridge crossing the now dry canal, which irrigated the fields when the Nile was at its fullest. To this point converged equestrian and pedestrian visitors, and the scene became very animated. Groups of maimed and diseased beggars lined the bridge and clamoured for alms. In advance was a lurid glare, cast on a fog of sand-dust, raised by the constant movement of the crowd, and a noisy hubbub of voices announced the *locale* of the festival. In a few minutes we were in the midst of a dense mob, through which it was not easy to penetrate. It seemed as if the entire inhabitants of the town, with a strong reinforcement from the villages near, had all met at this place. The spot, too, was generally solemn and quiet enough; it was the cemetery of the town, and the booths were erected close to the graves of the dead. The small mosque which covered the tomb of the saint whose festival now occupied the people, stood near, it was profusely lighted, and crammed to suffocation with

devotees. To look into the glaring building and see the throng violently engaged in pious genuflexions, excited wonder at human nature's powers of endurance. Round the walls of the building crowds of devotees had assembled, and added to the noise by loud exclamations, as they swung their bodies to and fro, seated in a continuous line. But the wildest scene was enacted in advance of the mosque; here long lines of dervishes, in advance of each other, were engaged in executing the *zikr*, a religious ceremony which consisted in repeating the name of "Allah," to a monotonous chant of two notes, each devoted to one syllable, and timed by a leader to the tap of a drum; the body was jerked violently from the hip, in a series of genuflexions, as this was done; the never-ceasing motion in the heat, dust, and excitement, was painful to look upon. A few yards beyond this the lonely graves straggled on toward open desert, the vast expanse of sand stretching far away to the Arabian hills, with nothing to disturb the solemn quiet of the scene, as it reposed in the moonlight.

Having seen the religious part of the *moolid*, we visited the strictly secular portion. The tents or booths were all crowded, but were so dimly lighted that little but the crowd could be distinguished. Coffee and pipes were the staple of enjoyment; they

were abundantly in request everywhere. The only entertainment was dancing; and groups of Ghawazee were in all of them, accompanied by the necessary musicians. The dances were usually performed by four or six of these girls, and consisted of slow movements, accompanied by a peculiar motion of the muscles of the abdomen, of most unpleasant effect; but which seems to be so essential a feature in all their dances, that it is continually indulged in, and proficiency gained by a training through life. To an European the effect is unpleasant, if not disgusting; to an Egyptian it is the only thing cared about. These girls were all sumptuously dressed in rich silks, and had a profusion of gold ornaments about them; rows of necklaces, strings of gold coins hanging from the hair, earrings, nose-rings, and anklets, testified to their earnings. One of them had constructed for herself a thick girdle of gold coins, by stringing them together, which terminated in an imposing bunch, arranged like a lozenge. Others wore a girdle from which hung small silver cases containing charms. All were, of course, unveiled; many with the tattooed faces and blued lips, which the women of Upper Egypt delight in possessing. None could be called beautiful; some were positively ugly, and not remarkably juvenile. They were attended by elderly women—decayed old dancing-

girls—who ministered to their wants in the way of handing refreshments, which consisted of strong drinks and tobacco.

The dances were all executed to a sort of *stoccata* music, with a shuffling sidelong movement; each dancer holding small cymbals in her hands, which marked time like the Italian castanet, but was certainly an improvement upon that stupid wooden invention; the sound emitted resembling the tinklings of a small bell: the cymbals were not larger than castanets, and were secured by a thong, which passed over the fingers. The thumb and the second finger regulated their movement, as the dance proceeded. These dances appear to have retained the most ancient features of such as delighted the forefathers of the Egyptians, in the days of the Pharaohs; the music, too, was of the simplest character, and, like the songs of the Nile boatmen, may have descended traditionally from very remote ages. The only dance that was peculiarly wild and striking, was one which concluded the series; in which the dancer threw herself forward with a sweeping dash of the leg, that seemed to possess a great deal of the presumed *abandon* of savage life. When the dancing was over, some of the performers sang; their voices were pitched to a high note, and the soloes were vociferated as they stood with the right arm on the hip,

and the left hand placed open close to the mouth, to give increased power to the voice; after the fashion of our street fishmongers. This seemed an established practice with all.

The next day being adverse to our progress, I again rode up to see what other amusements were provided for the visitors to the saint. Purchases at the stalls and coffee-drinking seemed still to be the chief attraction. There was, however, a performance of vaulting and posturising, by a group of Bedouins, who piled themselves on each others' shoulders pyramidally, and executed feats of tumbling, after the fashion of a company who visited this country a few years ago, and who have since been imitated by native acrobats at every street corner in London. A very tall Nubian acted as clown to the ring, and kept the vast crowd in good-humoured order. Some mounted Arabs exhibited their proficiency in throwing the *jereed,* or light spear, and performing many feats of dexterity while their horses were at full gallop, or dashing among each other in a movement like a wild dance. The dust, crowd, heat, and confusion which accompanied this part of the entertainment, made it unpleasant to all but a native.

Around and inside the mosque, the same crowd of devotees were grouped, all busy in the genuflexions and exclamations which seemed so wearisome to

mind and body, and so tediously monotonous to look upon. It was curious to witness the extreme of religious fervour and secular licence meeting and rioting together, on the same spot of ground—and that spot the repulsive grave-yard, with its half-ruined tombs and withered trees; while beyond was the waste of desert sand, lonelier and more death-like than all.

The whole scene was a living realisation of the European church festivals of the middle ages, when monkery winked at vice for the emolument it brought with it. The German engravers of the sixteenth century have preserved some features of these scenes, as "aids to reflection" for such as look back romantically to that fabulous period, "the good old times." King James I. of Scotland, in his description of that held at "Christ's Kirk on the Green," has given a vivid picture of what there took place; and his countryman, Burns, has left us a comparatively modern, but a still more striking example in his "Holy Fair."

A far more solemn scene awaits the traveller on the opposite shore, where the half-buried temple of Dendera lies amid heaps of sand. The road to it runs over rough ground, and across stubble, or coarse *halfeh* grass. Some camels were picketed beside enclosures of dried canes, and flocks and

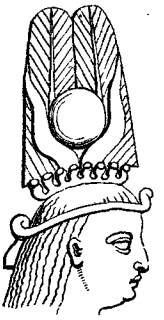
herds were attended by persons without other shelter than the screens of the same material, secured by hay-bands, after the fashion already described. Temporary coffee-shops of this construction, roofed in also with reeds, are generally to be found where boats anchor. All these people, whatever the nature of their occupation might be, left it to pursue a stranger for "backsheesh;" and one man, probably a sentimentalist, caught up a baby and held its tiny hand forth, thinking that an irresistible appeal. This eternal dogging and pestering for gratuities, is the most tiresome and provoking thing on the journey. Bayle St. John, in his "Village Life in Egypt," wonders that travellers complain at what he considers a sort of joke, declaring that the peasants cannot really expect to obtain what they continuously ask for, and that very often they merely speculate on the chance, or for the amusement of annoying; but such an argument is clearly a distinction without a difference, because the traveller is as much pestered by the eager and threatening looks of these beggars as if they were the effect of real emotion, and it is almost impossible to disbelieve that they are not so. At least, money is eagerly sought, and always secured if offered; in what, then, consists the difference?

The Temple of Dendera is situated on high ground,

the site of the old Tentyra, whose name has descended, with small variation, to our own era. The sands have encroached upon it, and the portico and interior were once half filled by the drift. The effect of this portico is exceedingly striking, and cannot fail to impress the visitor, who should not pass it by in going up the river, as is often the case in hurrying to Thebes, and so examining it afterwards. As this will be the first temple, in fine and comprehensible condition, he will see, it will aid him in understanding the general plan upon which they were all constructed; and he will be the better able to appreciate its beauties uncompared with the vaster ruins at Karnac. The style, too, of its architecture he will be told by the *cognoscenti* in Egyptian art, is bad, and its sculptures inferior; but this he will not know or feel by his own experience. It is wonderfully grand and impressive, until finer things are seen; but even then it is not without merits peculiarly its own, and will always abundantly reward the traveller who studies it.

The columns, twenty-four in number, which support this portico, are surmounted by gigantic heads of the goddess Athor, to whom the temple was dedicated. She was the Venus of the Egyptian Pantheon, and a fitting deity for the devotion of Cleopatra, who began the erection of this temple.

Upon the exterior walls of the sanctuaries, this queen, and her son, Neo-Cæsar, are represented in the act of making offerings to the goddess. These full-length portraits are colossal—about twice the size of life; the head of "the sultana," as the natives call her, is here reproduced in fac-simile. The regal fillet is surmounted by the attributes of Athor—no unfitting emblems for the wearer. As this portrait was executed by Egyptian artists, for the queen, during her lifetime, it is to be received as a resemblance; and though not, perhaps, equal to our notions of her beauty, is not without a grace that may have received "a touch beyond the reach of art," in the expression of the living original. Certainly it is infinitely superior to the only other authentic representation upon her coinage, which is absolutely ugly. That portraiture was attempted in the sculptures of ancient Egypt is not now doubted; and the peculiarly-marked features of Neo-Cæsar add strong confirmation to the fact. He was her son by Julius Cæsar, and his paternity is clearly shown by an unmistakable Roman nose, which no Egyptian artist would have delineated, if he had



done his work conventionally, as a mere picture of a native prince.

The portico of this temple is the least ancient part of the building, and is an addition of the time of Tiberius, as recorded in a Greek inscription running in a continuous line on the projecting fillet of the cornice. Some portions of this record have been purposely erased; but they may still be read when the light falls in a particular direction. M. Letronne has defined this date as the twentieth year of Tiberius Cæsar, and the inscription states that the portico was made in honour of "the very great goddess, Aphrodite," by the people of the metropolis and its district, for the welfare of the emperor, "the new Augustus, son of the god Augustus." It is therefore one of the most recent of the temples in Egypt, and is characterised by the elements of decadence. Its style lacks the purity and rigid beauty of the earlier architecture of the country; but this will scarcely be felt by the visitor who has not made architecture or sculpture, according to antique tastes, his peculiar study—hence the advantage of visiting this temple before Thebes or Edfou. It cannot be denied that there is great grandeur about this temple, and the pillars of its portico have in them more elements of the picturesque than the purer styles of an earlier era. The

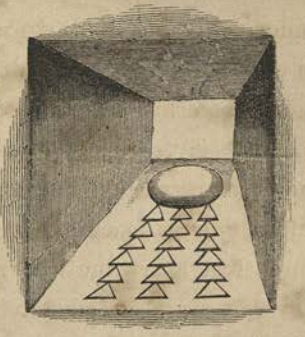
walls are covered with figures of the gods, hieroglyphic inscriptions, and ornamental decoration, all executed with singular elaboration in relievo, but certainly clumsier in style than older works. This portico and the hall beyond is now cleared to the base of the columns, and a staircase enables the visitor to descend to the floor of both. The French began the good work in the days of Denon and the *savans* who followed the army of occupation under Napoleon. The scientific world was startled by them with the remarks they issued on the subject of the famous zodiac upon its roof—remarks which sought to prove a most profound antiquity for this, in reality, comparatively modern relic, and a consequent confirmation of scepticism in Biblical lore. The completeness of the roofing of this temple is one of its most interesting features; the vast stones which rest on walls and pillars seem the work of giants rather than of men.

A series of chambers succeed these halls, the walls and roofs of all as elaborately decorated. The vast labour in decorative sculpture is amazing to contemplate, and throughout the building it is the same; no corner, however obscured, is without its due share. These temples have been happily compared to books of devotion, their written walls containing the elements of the ancient faith, illustrated by pic-

tures of the gods; hence to read these walls was to study religion, and there were literally "sermons in stones" which formed them. The isolated sanctuary, at the extreme end of the series of halls and chambers, has an avenue surrounding it and smaller apartments entered by its means. There are also underground chambers, to which access is gained by an entry befitting the mysterious nature of the worship consecrated to the goddess. A small square aperture gives admission from the inner hall to a long narrow passage, in which two persons can with difficulty pass each other; the walls are scarcely three feet apart, the roof about ten feet in height, yet they are also elaborately sculptured with figures of the gods. The passage takes a downward slope to the extreme boundary of the wall, when it turns at a sudden angle, and a sharp descent commences, ending in a chamber which was no doubt sacred to the most solemn mysteries of the long-forgotten faith. It is tenanted by owls and bats; the latter, disturbed by the glare of our torches, rushed past us in the narrow ways with such rapidity, as to give some reasonable alarm that they would extinguish our lights, and leave us to grope our way as best we could from these dusty labyrinths in total darkness.

The roof of the temple is reached by a stair the walls of which are crowded with figures, as if of an

ascending procession, many of the figures bearing emblematic standards. This stair winds round a centre at right angles, and is lighted by small windows very deeply splayed in the thickness of the wall. On the lowermost slope of all of them is a raised sculptured representation of the sun shedding rays of light, in the form of a series of small pyramids. Does this typify the sun as the giver of stability to life?



The view from the roof is very extensive, but comparatively barren. There is one feature here, however, completely unique, and this is the small temple which is built upon its south-eastern angle, exactly over the *adytum*, or sanctuary. It is hypæthral, or roofless, the entablature supported by twelve columns, four on each side, and after the fashion of those upon the portico; a sculptured screen is also between each, and the walls are covered with sacred ornament. It is an architectural gem which should not be overlooked by the visitor.

Much as has been done by drawing, engraving, and photography, it is impossible to visit this and

other temples without feeling how much more may yet be done ere a full idea of their elaboration, and the curiosity of their details, can be given to such as travel only in books, and see antiquities only in pictures. To properly measure and draw, analyse, and delineate all the peculiarities of Dendera, would task many labourers, and demand an illustrated folio volume. It would be well if such a work could be undertaken and carried out for any one temple, in order that the great leading principles of sacred architecture among the ancient inhabitants of this interesting land might be better comprehended. Dendera, though comparatively modern, has details of importance. I noticed particularly the water-spouts which drained the roof, and which prove that the builders were cautious to provide against the ill effects even of the few showers that fall in Egypt. They take the form of the fore part of a sedent lion, from whose mouth the water issues, and are supported on heavy corbels, as shown in our cut.

In passing the southern wall of the exterior, my attention was attracted to the sculptures which entirely cover it, and relieve so admirably that surface which would be dull monotony without them. I

noticed most of the outlines of the relieved intaglio of the figures filled in with lumps of clay; on looking higher, I found the upper row of sculptures quite obscured in their outlines by the same thing, while the cornice above was one mass of mud; but here was the solution of the mystery—thousands of wasps were busy about the whole mass, which was in reality a conglomerate of their nests. These little creatures have thus made the sculptures useful, and I found advantage had also been taken of the same bland sunny side of the gate in front of the temple.

Other ruins of smaller temples adjoin this nobler one. The most interesting is that to the south-west, believed to be the chapel of Isis alluded to by Strabo. It is very small, consisting only of a corridor in front of three chambers. A Greek inscription on the gate in advance of this building records its erection in the thirty-first year of the reign of Augustus, under the prefecture of Publius Octavius. The names of the Emperors Claudius and Nero also occur, as well as on the larger temple, as if it had been the policy of the emperors to conciliate the Egyptian people by completing and patronising the sacred structures founded by the last of their independent sovereigns. Upon the wall of the central chamber, the most holy of the series, is sculptured the sacred cow, under which form the goddess Isis was believed to

live among the people, as Osiris did under that of the sacred bull at Memphis. The animal is represented in a shrine placed in a boat steered by Horus; between its horns is the disc of the sun, surmounted by feathers, similar to that upon the head of Cleopatra, engraved on p. 243. There is a remarkable incident connected with this figure. When our army was occupied in expelling the French under Napoleon, it was joined by sepoys from our Indian ranks, who came by way of the Red Sea to Cosseir, and then by land to Keneh. When they visited this temple and saw this figure, they were impressed by a religious enthusiasm and prostrated themselves before it, believing that here they saw a venerable monument of their own faith. This has led many naturally to infer an intimate connection between the ancient religion of India and Egypt. Wilkinson, however, considers it "proves nothing beyond the accidental worship in two countries of the same animal;" but with all submission to such an important authority, it is impossible not to feel that the evidence would have been considered conclusive in other instances, and that much of our conjectural knowledge of the ancient faiths rests upon proofs equally slender. Nor is it too rash to trace to the most profoundly ancient religion of Egypt that of other Eastern faiths, when they have this striking identity, sufficient to awaken

the worship of strangers in the land—simple men whose faith was at once appealed to, and met by fervid religious response.

Near this, but to the northern side of the great temple, is another, which is sometimes termed the Typhoneum, from the circumstance of each capital being surmounted by the figure of the evil genius Typhon. It is also a small building, consisting of two external and three sacred chambers, whose walls are covered with subjects connected with the birth of Horus; it is, therefore, believed to have been the place set apart by the priesthood as the figurative residence of his mother, at the time when he was born. There are other instances of such adjuncts to the main building, dedicated to the worship of the great Egyptian triad, Osiris, Isis, and Horus; and the learned Champollion, to whose critical acumen we are indebted for the most important facts in connection with the history and hieroglyphic lore of the country, has classified them under the name *mammesei.*

The people of Tentyra were celebrated, at the time these temples were erecting, for their hostility to the crocodiles which infested the river hereabouts—waging a constant war with them, and exhibiting the greatest boldness and dexterity in capturing and destroying them. They were consequently hated

by their neighbours above and below this portion of the river, where these creatures were worshipped as sacred—protected and petted, fed daintily when living, and carefully embalmed when dead. The classic writers have left us many written testimonies of the proficiency of the Tentyrites, in exterminating, or catching and taming them. This extermination took place on a particular day, when they held a solemn service to Horus, and piled before his altars as many as they could kill, in accordance with the belief that the evil one, Typhon, eluded the vengeance of the god by assuming the form of one. Herodotus describes several modes of catching crocodiles, adopted by the people of this place: one was by fastening a piece of pork to a hook, and so casting it into the middle of the stream, attracting the crocodile towards it by the cries of a young pig beaten on shore; when the bait was swallowed, the creature hooked and dragged to land, its eyes were plastered with mud, to render its destruction safer. As a proof of the enduring character of the habits of ancient Egypt in the modern land, Wilkinson's account may be quoted, of one mode practised at the present day:—"They fasten a dog upon a log of wood, to the middle of which is tied a rope of sufficient length, protected by iron wire, or other substance, to prevent its being bitten through; and having put this into the stream,

or on a sandbank at the edge of the water, they lie concealed near the spot, and await the arrival of the crocodile. As soon as it has swallowed the dog, they pull the rope, which brings the stick across the animal's throat. It endeavours to plunge into deep water, but is soon fatigued by its exertions, and is drawn ashore; when receiving several blows on the head with long poles and hatchets, it is easily killed." Pliny assures us, that "though the Tentyrites are small men," they evinced the utmost courage in these encounters; and many scorned any artificial aid in catching or securing the monsters—plunging after them into the river, then, springing on their backs, placed a bar in their gaping mouths, which, acting like a bit, enabled them to force them on shore. Strabo relates that crocodiles were exhibited in the public games at Rome; and that for the amusement of that sight-loving populace some Tentyrites confirmed the truth of their traditional valour and expertness, by boldly entering the water-tank in which they were kept, casting a net about them, dragging them up the shelving side out of the water, and then, after a time, forcing them back into it. That they were in the habit of entirely taming these reptiles is also recorded by the same authors, and confirmed by a curious group in marble, a work of the Romanera, now in our British Museum (originally forming part

of the Towneley gallery of sculpture), representing an Egyptian or Nubian tumbler practising his art on the back of a tame crocodile; the creature supports his entire weight, and has been so trained that he lifts his tail as the tumbler lifts his legs; an exhibition considered sufficiently extraordinary thus to warrant immortality in marble.

Returning to the river, we may again enter our boat at Keneh, and proceed on our upward course. To the right the Lybian hills present more varied and picturesque forms than usual; their summits are peaked, and they sink, in ridged irregularity of outline, before each other, towards the stream, which shows to its best advantage between Keneh and Ballas. The hills are grand and wild on one side, the plain extensive and fertile on the other, with the Arabian hills in the extreme distance. Owing to the winding of the river, hill and plain, wood and water, combine to make the scenery very varied and picturesque.

The small town of Ballas lies in the level beneath these hills. It is chiefly remarkable as the manu-

factory from whence come the water-jars so universally used in Egypt; receiving their name from this town. They are constructed of the light yellow clay obtained here; and are used for domestic stores of oil and grain, but principally for water. They are carried by women, on their heads, from the river (as shown in the cut in p. 101), although many of them weigh, when full of water, from seventy-five to eighty pounds English; this hard labour being a daily task for the poor women. Their general form may be seen on a larger scale in the foreground of Plate VIII. They have no decoration beyond a few rude indentations, are of coarse manufacture, and sold very cheaply, being liable to rough usage and ready fracture. The ordinary pottery of Egypt always has this characteristic, and seems to have had it from the earliest times, which accounts for the vast accumulation of potsherds about modern villages and ancient cities. Among the latter an abundance of fragments of ancient painted Greek pottery might be readily found, did they reward the labour.

There is a shelving bank beside this town, upon which the rafts are constructed to carry this pottery down the river, and which are the great floating curiosities of the stream. They are most ingeniously and simply contrived, and consist of long rows of

these *amphoræ*, and layers of palm branches, held together by ropes formed of palm-fibre. The engraving exhibits one upon its voyage down the stream. The jars are laid in three rows ; the lowermost have their mouths upward, and are secured by

the ropes to the palm-branches above them, thus making a strong floating platform, upon which two other layers of pots are arranged. I counted the rows in one of these rafts, and found that there were sixty jars on the largest, and twenty on the narrowest sides; consequently there were twelve hundred in each layer, or three thousand six hundred in all. At each side a row-lock is made of sticks and rope ; a man, seated at each, propels the raft with a very primitive oar, which is merely a simple branch of a tree, selected because it has a group of smaller branches, which serve the purpose of the blade of an oar. In

the centre of the raft a passage is left for the crew, seldom consisting of more than four persons; the captain keeps a look-out in front, the steersman, with a long pole, occasionally giving his aid. Generally the entire crew are idle, the raft slowly taking its own course with the flow of the stream. When any large town is reached, the raft is partially unpacked; and thus it diminishes on its course down the river, until the cargo is disposed of, and some up-country boat brings its little crew back again to Ballas, for a fresh supply and a new voyage.

It was evening on both occasions when I passed this spot, and the scenery had an additional effect, owing to the hot haze that gave aerial perspective to each succession of hills beyond it. The sunsets on the Nile are probably the most glorious for beauty of colour to be seen anywhere, and are deservedly famed. No word-painting can display their glowing tints, upon which the eye dwells enraptured as the sun descends in a burning flood of golden light, accompanied by fleecy clouds of vapour, taking the most fantastic forms, and of a transparent rose colour, totally void of shadow. The golden hue of the horizon casts a faint green tinge where it mixes with the deep blue above; but the most extraordinary and exquisite effect remains to be seen after

the sun has set below the horizon—then a warm roseate glow is thrown over the entire sky; but it fades off opposite the sunken luminary, forming a high or false horizon, and on that side the grey darkness of evening remains midway in the sky, and increases in density as it nears the eastern land. By directing the sight thus from west to east, you

see at once the sunset, the twilight, and the night absolutely following the day. I have endeavoured to make this clearer by the few simple tints of the accompanying diagram—I wish I could as easily give the reader a view of the original scene. The remembrances of these sunsets are the most unalloyed of all the pleasures of my journey, and I lament that

nothing so gloriously beautiful of that kind is likely to be seen by me again.

Until the traveller reaches Negadeh there is nothing to necessitate stoppage. On the eastern banks are some remains of ancient towns, which have an interest to the antiquary, but, like many already alluded to, not to the general tourist, who will see elsewhere abundance of relics of a much finer order. Thus at Koft, and at Kous, or Goos, are a few remains to testify to their ancient importance. The first was the ancient Coptos, the second Apollonopolis Parva. They were the great depots for the Eastern traffic in the times of the Ptolemies and the Roman emperors, and hither came from the Red Sea all that wealth of merchandise Arabia and India offered, and whose splendid abundance has been so glowingly described in the scriptural narrative of the wealth of Solomon. The lonely, ruined, poverty-struck groups of mud hovels, and the quiet labours of the simple agriculturists, now take the place of the once busy and wealthy cities, and the swarming quays laden with the wealth of nations. On the Nile, even more than at Rome, do we reflect on the past and contrast it with the present, feeling the sentiment of Byron's apostrophe to that

"Lone mother of dead empires."

Negadeh has a repute for the manufacture of a

striped cotton cloth universally patronised by the Egyptians; it is termed *malayat*, and worn by the men in the same way as the plaid by the Scotch, in one long piece, formed by joining two or more breadths of the stuff. Its resemblance to the Scottish plaid is still more striking because it is striped in narrow lines of deep blue (produced by the same dye that delighted our forefathers, obtained from the flower of the woad, or *Isis tinctoria*), which in parts cross each other, and sometimes are mixed with a few lines of red. It is generally worn as an extra wrapper in travelling or at nights, when the Egyptian protects his neck and chest as carefully as the Italian does when the sun sinks. It can be readily folded about the body, or opened and wound round the person when sleeping. The cut shows the ordinary mode of casting it about the shoulders on commencing a journey, and the peculiar mode of carrying the stick by the traveller—slung across the shoulders, and held by both hands. The *malayat* is always a very picturesque addition to the simple gown or tunic of the lower

class Egyptian, and the carelessness with which its ample folds are cast about the person often gives grace and dignity to his figure. There is frequently a classic grandeur in the poorest dress; from the coarse nature of the materials, the folds fall broad and heavily, with great depth of shadow, and the *abandon* of hopeless poverty has a sullen dignity of its own, which is sometimes imparted to the dress itself.

Negadeh has, from the earliest time, been a stronghold of Christianity; ten years ago it was calculated that it contained about three thousand Christians, and only five hundred Mohammedans. Between it and the desert are some very ancient convents; and opposite the landing-place is a Roman Catholic establishment belonging to the *Propaganda*, within a pleasant walled garden, with a church, and residences for the monks, who have landed property to some extent here. The bitterness of persecution seems to have died out in the present race of Mohammedans, who do not incline to show more intolerance, and frequently not so much, as sectarians of our own creed. The Christians, if not respected, are tolerated; nor do the natives sneer at us more than we do at them. Indeed, it may be said that the Christian shows the worst spirit of the two; while from the disuse of all external devotion in daily prayer,

and an absence of gravity of mien, combined with the scoffing tendency he exhibits among things sacred, the Egyptian is led to believe him insensible to any religious influence at all.

The monks of Negadeh, by their knowledge of medicine, made themselves very useful to the natives in the days when Norden travelled; and hence secured immunity from their neighbours' love of rough peculation. The natives were not, however, very obliging towards the Europeans, he says, "and they even play them villanous pranks when they find an opportunity for it. "His boat was surrounded by a crowd, and "an abundance of Arabs," who at last boarded it, and "searched everything, even to the victuals that were in the pot." The brass and kitchen utensils were believed to be gold or silver; hence they concluded the boat was filled with wealth. The report rapidly spread, and became a dangerous thing wherever he went, as the natives were fully prepared to take advantage of all chances to rob. The difficulties and dangers of travel, in the early part of the last century, are powerfully delineated in the pages of Norden and Pococke, and afford a wondrous contrast to the present ease with which the journey may be performed. Tribes of Arabs then infested the river, all quarrelling with each other; strangers were universally looked on

with suspicion; landing for exploration was dangerous, and sketching believed to be a magic art, enabling the sketcher to obtain wealth, or mystic power over the country.

The pigeon towers of this town "fortify" it even more than usual. Nothing but blank walls, surmounted or strengthened by heavy square towers, meet the eye from the Nile-boat. The open mouths of the earthen pots imitate ranges of artillery, as they gape toward the spectator; and the whole aspect of the place at a distance is very formidable, though innocent enough when approached. Clouds of pigeons are over the place, fluttering about the towers, or resting on the twigs built in the mud walls in rows around them; inverted pots crowning the structures. There are gates to the lanes of the town which are closed at night; and on entering them, a series of narrow passages, redolent of dust and filth, gives access to the houses. High walls close in the pathway, where no sun penetrates, and where deep drains of refuse from the houses fester in the heat, along with nameless pollutions against walls, cast out from within doors. "The great mental disease of the Orientals is their love of filth," says Bayle St. John; they seem to be incapable of annoyance at its presence, and to lay traps for plague and fever. Cleanliness would be impossible, as in Europe, in a

country of dust and mud houses; but people seem here to revel in dust, as fowls do, bustling and rubbing about till they make a comfortable seat, where they will sit dreamily for hours, too lazy to brush the flies from their faces. The Italians who have invented the phrase, *dolce far niente*, and are supposed to be proficients in carrying out its precepts, are much behind the Egyptians in this peculiar qualification. It would be, probably, impossible to parallel elsewhere the mental and bodily torpor of an Egyptian, when smoking for hours together on a sandbank beside the Nile. Life and time seem to be to him utterly valueless, and, therefore, to be placidly got rid of by mere unthinking endurance.

On leaving Negadeh, I again noticed the encroachments the river is continually making on the western bank. It has carried off some houses, and cracked the walls of others. As they are all built of mud, or mere sun-dried bricks, they are miserably fragile, but in this dry climate they stand long enough to satisfy the people; yet the English traveller cannot fail to feel that a heavy week's rain, as we have it in Cornwall, or Ireland, would reduce any of these towns to a mass of mud.

The river is very shallow and winding beyond this; and there are large islands and sandbanks in the stream, which are tenanted by vast flocks of birds,

astonishing to the stranger in their quantity. Each kind keeps in companies, and the pelicans seem the first to move at the approach of a boat, the rest following the example in successive flocks. The eastern bank of the river is here more fertile than usual; it is one mass of trees and plants, with numerous gardens and sugar plantations—a perfect Egyptian Arcadia. As we approach Thebes, the hills to the left recede far into the distance; but the Libyan range rises more grandly than ever on the opposite shore.

This approach to Thebes was different to all my preconceived ideas, and, as regarded impressiveness, totally disappointing. The plain is so vast, the hills so distant, the mud-banks so high, that a general flatness and tameness pervades the whole. The vast towers of Karnac are the first thing noticed on the left side; but they are a mile and a half from the river, and appear a mere mass of stone. About the same distance in advance Luxor is descried, on a slight elevation—a conglomerate of houses and ruins, one helping to obscure the other. The opposite bank is a strong contrast to this, in its villages, temples, ruins, and noble hills; nothing grander or more picturesque could be desired.

Thebes, at the present day, is almost as non-existent as Memphis; true, it is not under the Nile

waters, and has more relics of its past greatness to show; but there is no place bearing the name, or absolutely representing the hundred-gated city. Letters may be directed "Thebes," and will find their way into the hands for which they are intended; but they are all brought to Luxor, which is now the principal town of the group occupying the site of ancient Thebes. This group consists of Luxor and Karnac on the eastern bank, and Gournou and Medinet-Abou on the western. Luxor is the great stopping-place for all boats, and here reside the consuls of the various nations. Its name is derived from El-Uksor, or *the palaces,* in evident allusion to the noble ruins remaining. The columns of the great central hall of the temple form the portico of the residence of Mustapha Aga, who is consul for the English and Americans; the flags of these countries waving from each corner of the portico, the noblest any house could possess. This consul speaks English fluently, is intimately acquainted with the entire locality, of most agreeable and obliging manners, and, what is still more valuable, is a most honest man. Like all the other consuls, he is a dealer in antiquities, and occasionally gets good things. But all antiquities are dearer at Thebes than in London, and less likely to be genuine; for the demand is sometimes greater than the genuine

supply. Most persons would buy at Thebes, and at a large price, what they would not purchase at a moderate rate in London. The most absurd sums are given by travellers for what dealers at home would be only too glad to get rid of for a trifle. The same thing occurs at Rome, where visitors will buy wretched coins (only worth their weight in metal, or at so much a bushel) at a cost perfectly preposterous. The men of Gournou are adepts in supplying the demand for Egyptian antiquities, and fabricate scarabei, small figures of the gods, and clay seals with royal names, sometimes in a most ingenious manner. They force a trade with intense perseverance, and every person in the Theban district has something of the kind to sell; even the children have a few to tempt purchasers. The adults are less difficult to deal with, never taking a refusal, but following and pestering the stranger wherever he goes, thrusting them upon him, and often exclaiming, with a stern frown—"Buy, you buy! all gentlemen buy at Thebes."

The staple trade is in scarabei; if genuine, large prices are asked for them. I have known instances of three and four pounds English asked, and obtained, for them. If false, they are by no means cheap, but, I need scarcely add, dear at any price. These men, from their great experience in rifling the

graves at Gournou, have a perfectly educated eye for a true thing, and will not part with it cheaply. It is not safe for a mere *dilletante* visitor, or one not conversant with genuine antiques, to purchase at his own caprice at all. But of course advice of this sort is never taken; and the assertion "I brought it myself from Thebes," is too fascinating a thing to be able to say at home, and is generally considered argument enough against any amount of scepticism that may be exhibited.

Luxor is certainly one of the most singular towns on the Nile; the modern buildings crowd upon the ancient, and the mixture is often grotesque. The miserable mosque, and worse hovels, withinside the ruined temple; the crowd of pigeon-towers, and the appropriation to granaries and store-rooms of what were anciently the holiest chambers,—make confusion worse confounded, upon a first tour over these ruins.

There is a wretched bazaar in this town—a series of sheds in a narrow lane leading to Karnac; the divans in front of each are mere cubes of mud, and the articles for sale confined to those of the cheapest and worst class. Still there is no town that mixes up the old and new more strangely than this, or gives so good an idea of the state of these places when the earlier travellers visited them; since

which time many have been improved, the ruins cleared and freed of inhabitants, as at Dendera and Edfou.

The fall of rain is so seldom noted by travellers, that although the assertion is not warranted, it is often made,—that "no rain falls at Thebes." On the day that I reached it, it rained heavily; this was on the 29th of January. The clouds had been very heavy all the morning, and the whole aspect of Egypt was very like England in September. Thunder clouds had settled over the Lybian range, where the storm appeared to condense, and occasional rumblings from thence, accompanied by flashes of lightning, testified to the strength of the storm in that locality.

I took an early opportunity of going ashore, and walking up to the Temple of Luxor. The extraordinary delicacy of the sculptured reliefs upon the walls of the smaller chambers, struck me most forcibly, and I here first felt the placid loveliness of ancient Egyptian art; and although I had been conversant with these works at home, and had drawn from many of them, I felt that I had never seen them properly before.

As I met a party of friends here about to start for Karnac, I went there first, in defiance of the solemn injunctions of Sir Gardner Wilkinson, who earnestly

advises the traveller to go there *last*. He is certainly right; but the visitor who, like myself, goes by accident, and with the intention of merely getting a general idea of this vast group of ruins, cannot do his visits to other places much harm by thus seeing the largest first, which is the only objection made. It is necessary that Karnac be visited more than once, and thought over frequently. It is the largest mass of ruins in the world, and its plan most difficult to comprehend. I came away with no more than a general sense of its vastness and confusion; and I found the other ruins at Thebes, help me afterwards to its better comprehension, when I ultimately went seriously to study them.

On leaving the ruins, and looking back upon them midway in the plain, the beauty of the vast group was wondrously enhanced by a brilliant rainbow that spanned the whole from side to side, and seemed to lift it upward toward its prismatic tints; while the deep grey of the sky behind, acted as a foil to the ruins, lit up by the glare of the sun condensed in storm. I was fortunate in seeing so striking an effect, for I was told such a rain had not been experienced here for eight years. The natives seemed really alarmed at the occurrence; it came upon us as we returned, and I got well soaked before I could reach the boat. The sun went down in lurid light,

and at ten p.m., as I wrote my daily journal, I again heard the rain pattering on the roof of the cabin; and as I looked through the windows, the fitful gleams of moonlight, succeeded by deep darkness, gave greater vastness to solemn Luxor.

CHAPTER VIII.

ANCIENT THEBES.

Luxor is the farthest point attempted by the larger amount of travellers who ascend the river. Less than half their number do not penetrate beyond; and of those who do, Edfou is the last place visited. Few get so far as Assouan, and fewer pass the cataracts to Abou-Simboul. Certainly Thebes is a fitting culmination to a Nile journey; which, if ended there, will have increased in its interest during the entire progress from Cairo, and terminated in a more vast, solemn, and wondrous assemblage of remains of the old world, than can be seen in any other land.

There are intelligent native men on both sides the river, who act as guides to travellers; but it is a settled point of honour with them not to trespass on each other's district, so that each devotes himself to accompany the visitor upon his own side of the stream. By long habit they have obtained consider-

able knowledge of the most important sculptured details on the various ruins, saving the traveller a vast amount of time and trouble in looking for them himself. Their local knowledge of course is perfect, for an Egyptian is no traveller except by dire necessity; and is quite content to vegetate for life in his own town or village, if he have his merest wants supplied. A very intelligent and venerable old man, named Achmet Gournou, accompanied me over the side of the stream where the village lies from which he obtains his name. He had also accompanied the American artist, Bayard Taylor, who has done such good service by his illustrated books of travel, always pleasant, instructive, and elegant. Achmet knew very little English, but had contrived to use that small quantity judiciously, and make himself clearly understood. He had the natural tact to understand his visitors, allowing them to loiter if they chose; but taking them at once to the most interesting points, if they desired to see them only, and not waste thought or energy over so vast a field as opens to them here. He knew all the gods perfectly well, and the subjects of the principal sculptures; but his natural quickness and limited English gave much abruptness to his mode of bringing them to notice; and "See! Osiris!"—"See! Battle!" are specimens of his

style. I had much difficulty in keeping my gravity; so as not to offend the good old man, when he pointed to the offerings made to the gods, and exclaimed, "See! Lunch!"

A ferry-boat carries passengers from Luxor to the opposite side of the river; but the shore shelves so gradually that persons are landed on the backs of the *fellahs*, unless a horse be brought to the side of the boat and mounted, the top of a saddle being nearly upon a level therewith. Horses may be had on both sides the river, but they are a heavy, raw-boned set of animals. Donkeys and sharp donkey-boys are, of course, in profusion. It is most amusing at early morning to watch the first boat-load of visitors cross the river, and to see the rush from the various quarters, by donkeys and drivers, over the mile or so of sand between them and the landing-place, as they all converge towards it for custom, and tumble helter-skelter into the stream, in numbers far exceeding all necessary requirements.

Once landed and mounted, it becomes almost irresistible to go straight on over the plain to the seated colossi, and examine those mystic figures which, like the Sphinx at Ghizeh, have been impressed on all minds from the days of infancy. As they are midway from the other ruins we must visit, it is no bad plan to do this. The road we take was

anciently marked by lines of sphinxes leading towards them, as they reposed in front of some noble temple. Now we pass over a long level of sand, and by an open road, through verdant fields of lentils, barley, wheat, and tobacco, the last growing wild in every crevice formed by the sun, as its heat cracks into wide fissures the alluvial soil, and in which only it seems to particularly love to root itself. Distances are, as usual, very deceptive here; and it is a half-hour's ride to what appears a half-hour's walk, as the road is seen from Luxor.

It is useless to attempt a new description of these vast and wondrous statues, the admiration of all travellers, ancient and modern. Their impressiveness upon the thoughtful mind is as perfect as that of the more colossal Sphinx. It is impossible to look on these works of man's hand in their long endurance, without reflecting on the smallness of the span of his existence, in comparison with the lasting character of his own creations. Nothing is so humiliating to the animal man as this; nothing so glorious as a proof that such a mental conformation must be destined for a greater immortality than his mere works in a perishable world. No art-work so nearly approaches the reality of the old Greek notions of god-like existence as the severely grand sculptures of the still more ancient Egyptians. The solemn

dignity of eternal repose sits upon every figure. The world and its changes are as nothing to them; thousands of years would have passed traceless over their forms, for it is the hand of man that has injured what it cannot destroy; little less than the destruction of the world itself could effect by natural agency the ruin of these masses of hard rock.

The worst mischief has been done to that most Eastern figure, the far-famed "Vocal Memnon." It was ruthlessly broken by the savage hands of the vindictive conquerors of Thebes, and restored by later rulers in the Roman era. These restorations consist of the layers of sandstone that join head and body of the statue, originally one solid mass of grit-stone, standing on its now submerged pedestal the entire height of sixty feet above the plain. The sand and soil have encroached in the course of ages and buried this pedestal nearly to its summit: when the Nile is high, the land here is completely overflowed, and the colossi not to be approached. They were no doubt originally not only on high pedestals, but on elevated ground, far from the danger of the stream, which now naturally irrigates Egypt doubtless to a greater extent than in ancient times. Wilkinson has thus given their proportions:—"They measure about 18 feet 3 in. across the shoulders, 16 feet 6 in. from the top of the shoulder to the

elbow, 10 feet 6 in. from the top of the head to the shoulder, 17 feet 9 in. from the elbow to the finger's end, and 19 feet 8 in. from the knee to the plant of the foot." Upon the pedestals are sculptured figures of the god of the Nile binding sheaves of water-plants, emblematic of the stability of the country. Small figures in high relief are beside the legs of the colossi, and are believed to delineate the wife and mother of the king whom they represent—Amunoph III., who is identical with the Memnon of the Greeks and Romans. Upon the legs and feet of this statue are many antique inscriptions, recording the experience and feeling of the devout in the classic ages, who heard and believed in the supernatural character of the voice or sound that issued from the lips of the statue, when the sun's first beam struck upon its face from the opposite shore. The *real* nature of this sound seems to have been simple enough. Wilkinson has described it clearly and fully. He ascended to the lap of the figure, and found there a sonorous stone which emitted a metallic sound, "that might still be made use of to deceive a visitor who was predisposed to believe" the mystery—a squared space behind this stone would admit and conceal any person who might be placed there. The sound is described by the ancients as resembling the breaking of a harp string, or a blow

upon metal. That it required credulous faith even to feel that it came from the head of the figure, is evident from Strabo's difficulty in determining whether it proceeded from the statue, the pedestal, or the smaller figures below. One such simple sound struck unexpectedly could scarcely be critically heard. Sometimes the figure was silent altogether when worshippers came, but sufficiently courtier-like when the Emperor Hadrian became a listener to utter its note three times, in flattering acknowledgment of the royal presence. When Wilkinson struck the stone with a small hammer, having placed peasants near it to tell him their impressions of the sound emitted, they exclaimed, "You are striking brass." "This," he says, "convinced me that the sound was the same which deceived the Romans, and led Strabo to observe that it appeared to be the effect of a slight blow." Anxious to hear for myself this renowned note, I obtained a peasant from the village, who was used to ascend the broken side of the figure, to go up and strike it repeatedly. I noted in my journal a very simple simile—"the sound was exactly like the blow struck by a butcher on his cleaver." I think there is no reasonable shadow of a doubt that this is the solution of the whole mystery.

In the rear of these colossi are the fragments of

others, less large, but still stupendous. The temple which was the crowning point of the whole group has totally disappeared. Wilkinson is of opinion that the royal street, mentioned in some papyri found at Thebes, crossed the western portion of this suburb of that city, and communicated with the ferry at Luxor; the temple of the latter place and Karnac being again connected by an avenue of sphinxes. Nothing can be grander than the disposition of the city and its buildings, as still indicated by its fragments remaining. This Libyan suburb must also have possessed an elegance peculiar to itself, and worthy to combine with the renowned capital of Upper Egypt, the home of science and art in the old time, before Moses shared in the wisdom of its philosophers.

The village of Gournou is a mere collection of farms and hovels sheltered by a few trees. We may trace among them the homes of Nubian peasants by the queer-looking gods of clay, stuck up as protectors over their small possessions, on the walls and gates of the hovels of these poor pagans. There is another peculiarity to be observed in the villages of Upper Egypt generally, and that is the groups of clay ovens, of all sizes and forms, erected by the people for bread baking. No house is without one of these, but in many instances each indulges in a group of them.

The fire is made below, the bread occupying the closed or open receptacles above. Our cut will give a good idea of their structure.

Belzoni is very hard on the men here; he says, "The people of Gournou are superior to any other Arabs in cunning and deceit, and the most independent of any in Egypt. They boast of being the last that the French had been able to subdue, and when subdued, they compelled them to pay the men whatever was asked for their labour; a fact which is corroborated by Baron Denon himself. They never would submit to any one, either the Mamelukes or the Pasha. They have undergone the most severe punishments, and been hunted like wild beasts by every successive government of Egypt. Their situations and hiding-places are almost impregnable." In spite of this unfavourable opinion, it is impossible to help feeling that if a spirit of similar insubordina-

tion to such a wretched and unjust government as that of Egypt had been more general, it would have been better for ruler and ruled, and the country could never have sunk so low as it has. "They are the most unruly people in Egypt," continues Belzoni; "at various times many of them have been destroyed, so that they are reduced from three thousand, the number they formerly reckoned, to three hundred, which form the population of the present day. They have no mosque, nor do they care for one; for though they have at their disposal a great quantity of all sorts of bricks, which abound in every part of Gournou from all the surrounding tombs, they have never built a single house." They have an invincible dislike to cultivate the land, and "if left to their own will, would never take a spade in hand except to dig for mummies, which they find to be a more profitable employment than agriculture." Their clever tricks on travellers have been already alluded to. They make the most of a real discovery, such as a genuine papyrus, by breaking it in many pieces, and wrapping them round a false centre: they fabricate clay seals so that a very practised eye could scarcely detect the fraud; and as they copy genuine cartouches, particularly that of Rameses the Great, which so frequently appears on the walls of the ruins here, the unsuspecting traveller is generally satisfied

by taking the witness of his own eyes to the "genuine" similarity of the work. Enormous prices are asked and sometimes obtained for these things; but it is surprising how little they will receive if the traveller persevere in refusing to buy. Of course they have a first-rate knowledge of genuine articles, as they have made the fictitious, and they must often smile at the credulity of travellers who give large sums for absurd forgeries, which they carry home to boast over, and become irritated by *cognoscenti* who tell them the truth, though, as they angrily remark, "I got it myself, sir, at Thebes!"

Pursuing our ride northernly from the colossi, we reach the far-famed Memnonium, or Rameseum, a mass of ruins, confused, but beautiful. It is generally believed to have been the palace-temple of Rameses II., the Sesostris of the Greeks, the office of king and chief priest uniting in the royal character; and this, the greatest of Egyptian sovereigns, ascended the throne about 1311 years before Christ, according to Wilkinson's chronology: but it must be observed that Egyptian chronology is, and is ever likely to be, in a very uncertain state. To this powerful and warlike monarch Egypt is indebted for the finest monuments which decorated Egypt and Nubia, not only artistic, but stupendous in their character, and extending to the gigantic rock-cut

temples of Abou-Simboul. The ruins of the Memnonium consist of two courts and a grand hall; but the whole much levelled and injured. The great gateway is in ruins; but upon this and the walls of the courts are most interesting sculptures delineating the wars of the king with his Asiatic enemies, forming a series of pictures of the highest interest as exponents of the military tactics of this people. The sieges of cities and hill fortresses, the battles on plains and by rivers, the life of the camp, the subjugation of the besieged, and the final triumph of the king, are given with admirable life and spirit; while the details are rendered with all that scrupulous accuracy which has made Egyptian delineation so valuable, in enabling us to understand the minutest adjunct in the life of past ages: all is as conscientiously given by the hand of these old sculptors as could be done by the most modern photographer.

The great wonder of this ruin is the broken statue of the king, which Hecatæus tells us was the largest in Egypt. Wilkinson observes that, "to say that this is the largest statue in Egypt will convey no idea of the gigantic size or enormous weight of a mass which, from an approximate calculation, exceeded when entire nearly three times the contents of the great obelisk of Karnac, and weighed about eight hundred and eighty-seven tons." It

represented the king seated on his throne, his hands resting on his knees, after the conventional style of Egyptian design, and similar to the colossi of the plain. Its foot is nearly 11 feet in length and 4 feet 10 inches in breadth; across the shoulders it measures 22 feet 4 inches, and from the shoulder to the elbow is 12 feet 10 inches in length. To increase our wonder, this vast block of stone was transported from the quarries at Syene (the modern Assouan), one hundred and twenty-four miles higher up the river. It now lies in shattered fragments beside the portico of the great hall, as shown in Plate XIV. By what means this vast figure was overthrown, and split into fragments as easily as if it had been a porcelain image, is not to be defined. Wooden wedges firmly driven, and then soaked with water, would do this, and was a plan adopted in procuring the vast blocks of stone from the quarries by the ancient Egyptians; but the wedge holes are always to be detected, and in this statue there are no such things, or any other apparent modes of fracture. The head has been more injured than usual by the Arabs, who have cut millstones therefrom; but the royal head-dress, and the eyes and ears of the bust, are clearly to be made out. Upon the shoulder is deeply cut the name in hieroglyphics; the arms, and the ribbed dress of the

F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

THE RAMESEUM, THEBES.

figure may also be clearly seen; but the lower portion of the statue is now a mere mass of fragments. The portico beside it is remarkable for its Osiride pillars, clearly shown in our view. The god Osiris is represented with crook and whip held in his crossed arms, reposing against each pillar; the crown which surmounted his head has, in all instances, disappeared. The figures are, it will be observed, of colossal proportion and much grandeur of style. Two lateral corridors of circular columns are connected with them. These columns are in the best antique taste, representing bundles of the stalks, buds, and petals of water-plants. It is much to be regretted, that this noble specimen of early architecture is in so fragmentary and ruinous a condition. It has few rivals in Egypt.

At the entry to this temple still lies the granite statue from which Belzoni took the head now in our British Museum, popularly known as the head of Memnon, the most celebrated monument of Egyptian art in any European collection, whether we consider its history, its colossal proportion, or the style of its sculpture. At the back are hieroglyphics which record the gifts of power, and dominion, length of years, &c., by the god Amun-Ra to the King Rameses II. The actual height of this bust is nearly nine feet; consequently the entire figure was

about twenty-four feet in height. There are traces of colour upon it. Its expression is that of majestic male beauty. The hole drilled in the right shoulder was made for, and the fracture across the left occasioned by, blasting; and believed to have been done by the French, during their occupation of the country, who by such means dissevered the head, no doubt with the notion of removing it. Belzoni was employed to remove it by the then British consul in Egypt, Henry Salt, at the suggestion of the traveller Burckhardt, and made his first journey up the Nile at their expense, after the failure of his labours for the Pasha (as narrated in p. 57). Great difficulties beset his labour, and he made the Memnonium his home while superintending the labourers; "a small hut was formed of stones, and we were handsomely lodged," says he. He has cut his name as a record upon the body of the figure, which still remains where it has lain for centuries.

His account of its removal is of much interest:— "All the implements brought from Cairo to the Memnonium consisted of fourteen poles, eight of which were employed in making a sort of car to lay the bust on; four ropes of palm leaves, and four rollers, without tackle of any sort. I arranged my men in a row, and agreed to give them thirty paras a day, which is equal to fourpence halfpenny English

money, with which they were much pleased, as it was more by one-half than they were accustomed to receive for their daily labour in the fields. The carpenter had made the car, and the first operation was to endeavour to place the bust on it. The *fellahs* of Gournou, who were familiar with *Caphany*, as they named the colossus, were persuaded that it could never be moved from the spot where it lay; and when they saw it moved, they all set up a shout. Though it was the effect of their own efforts, it was the devil, they said, that did it; and as they saw me taking notes, they concluded it was done by means of a charm. The mode I adopted to place it on the car was very simple; for work of no other description could be executed by these people, as their utmost sagacity reaches only to pulling a rope, or sitting on the extremity of a lever as a counterpoise. By means of four levers I raised the bust, so as to leave a vacancy under it, to introduce the car; and, after it was slowly lodged on this, I had the car raised in the front, with the bust on it, so as to get one of the rollers underneath. I then had the same operation performed at the back, and the colossus was ready to be pulled up. I caused it to be well secured in the car, and ropes so placed that the power might be divided. I stationed men with levers at each side of the car, to assist

occasionally, if the colossus should be inclined to turn to either side. In this manner I kept it safe from falling. Lastly, I placed men in the front, distributing them equally at the four ropes, while others were ready to change the rollers alternately. Thus I succeeded in getting it removed the distance of several yards from its original place." Day by day the same slow process went on; but as the *fellahs* found they received money for the removal of a stone, they entertained the opinion that it was filled with gold inside, and should not be allowed to be taken away; and ultimately orders came from Luxor that the natives were to stop work. Belzoni was at that time ill from the effects of the hot climate, but his proceedings were of the most vigorous order,—"I took my janizary with me, and crossed the water to Luxor. I there found the Caimakan, who could give me no reason for his proceeding but saucy answers, and the more I attempted to bring him into good humour by smooth words and promises, the more insolent he became." Belzoni was well aware that conciliation is merely looked on as cowardice by such a person, and a violent scene succeeded; he drew his sword, when Belzoni seized and disarmed him, gave him a good shaking, declared he would report him to the Pasha, and send him the pistols and sword he had

endeavoured to use, "to show in what manner his orders were respected." He then hastened down the river to Erment, and after an absolute refusal, reversed only by a bribe, got an order from the Cacheff there for the necessary amount of labourers. After sixteen days the bust arrived at the edge of the river; but it was long before it was safely placed in a native vessel, and on its way to Cairo. The difficulties that beset Belzoni, from intrigues and jealousies, as well as the natural dangers of the undertaking, and the total want of proper men and material, testify loudly to the indomitable perseverance of the man who could successfully surmount them all.

Near this is the older temple dedicated to Amun, by Sethi, the father of Ramesis II., and completed by the latter king. It is covered with historic sculpture, but is confused in its ground-plan, and is less interesting among the vast group of important monuments which cover this plain, than it would be if isolated elsewhere. All around these remains are fragments of statues and ruined buildings. It is hopeless for the casual visitor to see one quarter of the objects which will crowd upon his attention, and which three months would not exhaust, though three days is the longest time often bestowed on them. Arab huts are built into many temples, and help to obscure others. The tombs are often converted into

residences, and always so used by visitors; they form clean and airy rooms, which are not the characteristics of house accommodation at Gournou.

About five hundred yards to the north-west of the Memnonium is a tomb which appears to have been constructed for some one of the family of Amunoph III., whose name appears upon it. It is partially covered by Arab huts, and its chambers are now tenanted by donkeys, goats, and pigeons. The still dirtier human inhabitants guard the entry, and clamour for *backsheesh*, but it is well worth the trouble and trifling cost of a visit. Nothing in Egypt is more beautiful than the sculptures on the walls. They have a tenderness and beauty, combined with an elaboration of finish, perfectly charming. Art could not be carried farther. Like all ancient Egyptian sculpture, they are much superior to the later works of the Ptolemaic era. Putting their conventionality aside, it would be impossible for modern art to do more than rival them. They are not restricted to figures of gods and men, but include many admirably executed scenes of ordinary life, which have been so valuable as exponents of Egyptian manners in the days of the nation's glory.

And now how shall I in fitting words describe European Vandalism? Some of the finest of these *bassi-relievi* are splintered into fragments in the

vain endeavour to carry away a part of their decoration, and a feeling of angry disgust is the only one that fills the mind of the spectator. If Dr. Lepsius' name had been mentioned less frequently in Egypt in connection with this and other serious mischief, a charitable disbelief might attach to the report of his doings. But it is impossible to indulge a doubt on this point. It is not abstraction alone, but reckless destruction that he has been guilty of.

In advance of the spectator, up the hill sides, as well as over the surface of the plain, are the grave-caverns, or tombs, of the ancients. From the earliest times they have been plundered by the men of Gournou, to obtain the ornaments of the mummies, or the antiquities deposited with them. The search seems never ending, but always to be rewarded. I have noted a most valuable recent discovery in p. 78. When I was there, an exceedingly fine mummy was obtained, which was richly swathed, enclosed in a painted *cartonnage*, that again in a wooden case elaborately decorated, and ultimately enclosed in an outer case of cedar wood. All were as fresh as the day when they were executed, and of much artistic excellence. It passed into the possession of Alfred Denison, Esq., who was then at Thebes; and upon unrolling it, a touching memento revealed itself in a small bunch of mimosa flowers,

which some affectionate hand had placed there, as a last tribute of living love, perhaps three thousand years ago.

The mummies are not restricted here to mankind; deified animals also abound. Jackals, apes, crocodiles, and cats, are occasionally found as carefully prepared against decay. The ingenuity of the mummy-makers is displayed, not only in their successful modes of preserving, but also in that of enveloping, these creatures. The bandages are sometimes arranged so that the different tints of the narrow strips of linen form a pattern, or a sort of chequer, as they overlap each other. This is particularly the case with the cat-mummies, one of which we engrave; and others may be seen in our National Museum. The paws of these creatures were folded close upon the body; the bandage covering the head, rudely, but characteristically, painted like life. They were among the most sacred of the series of creatures respected by the Egyptians; the honours paid to them were only second to that of the sacred bull. When they died, their masters shaved their

own eyebrows, to indicate grief, and gave the cats honourable burial. Diodorus tells us how careful they were to prepare proper rations of bread and fish for these household pets; and that when a fire occurred in a building, the only anxiety of its proprietor was to save their lives. They accompanied their masters in fishing and fowling excursions; and a cat so engaged is represented upon the walls of one of these Theban tombs: in our British Museum is the fragment of a fresco-painting, representing an Egyptian gentleman in his boat on the Nile, engaged in capturing wild fowl, his cat having leaped into a thicket of lotus plants, to secure the birds he has knocked down. To kill a cat, even inadvertently, was so gross a crime, that the classic writer just quoted assures us, the people would not save the life of a Roman who had done this, even though at the time they were most anxious to conciliate the Roman government. The great positive value of the cat was its watchful care in freeing houses of scorpions and other noxious creatures. It was sacred to Pasht, or Bubastes, the goddess principally worshipped at Thebes, and identical with the Diana of the Greeks, who was fabled to have taken the form of a cat, to escape the evil spirit Typhon. Plutarch speaks of the peculiar activity of the creature by night, the contraction of the eyes under lunar influence, &c.;

hence the cat has been always popularly connected with the mysticisms of Luna or Hecate; and the witches of mediæval and modern times have always had their familiars under the form of a cat. The judicial proceedings of the witch-finders in the time of our James I., as well as the poetic pages of Goethe's "Faust," connect the cat with witchcraft—an opinion largely held by the populace of all countries; and by the peasantry of our own, who esteem a black cat as peculiarly "lucky to a house." The undying character of popular superstition is more certain than the stability of a religious faith.

To ramble among these sepulchres, and examine their sculptures and painting, it is necessary to have full leisure; they are too extensive for mere enumeration, but sufficiently interesting to repay any investigation. Among them is that celebrated one where the labours of the brickmakers are delineated. A recent traveller has well described this tomb in its present condition as "a nursery for tame pigeons, which resent intrusion by fluttering from side to side, and charging the atmosphere with impalpable dust. That under these circumstances the paintings should grow dim is not surprising, and it may be anticipated with regret that a continuance of this state of things will render them at no distant date hopelessly obscure." For a long time this famous

delineation was believed to represent the Israelites of Scripture engaged in the labours described in the books of Moses. Modern critical knowledge has, however, decided that so far from this being the case, it is not likely that the figures represent Jews at all, that the people of that nation were not so employed in Upper Egypt, and that, in fact, the only absolute contemporary illustration of the sacred narrative is the conventional figure of Rehoboam at Karnac, alluded to in a future page of this chapter. But this fact does not at all render this, or other pictured scenes of ancient Egypt, less valuable as illustrative of the manners and customs alluded to by Moses, and the prophets and chroniclers whose inspired labours make up our Bible.

The most remarkable of the later sepulchres are those of the Assaseef, immediately in the rear of the palace-temple of Rameses. Wilkinson dates them in the seventh century before our era, and speaks of them as "not less remarkable for their extent than for the profusion and detail of their ornamental sculpture." It is, however, of a kind that tells more of wealth than true taste, and lacks the simple beauty of the earlier work, like that we see in the tomb of Amunoph, already spoken of.

A chasm in the Lybian hills leads from Gournou to the Biban-el-Malook, the "gates" (of death?) or

tombs of the kings. This dismal valley is almost unbearable in sultry weather. The sun strikes down like a burning glass between the limestone rocks, and the heated flint and sands over which you travel make the entire journey more unpleasant than the desert itself. Not a breath of air circulates in this close defile, where all is dry and desolate, without a tree or blade of grass to relieve the eye from the yellow aridity. In my life I never felt heat like this, and more than once I feared I must have given up farther progress. After a short journey that seemed very long, the winding road came to an end, the rocks forming a sort of semi-circular barrier. Some square apertures at their base revealed the entries to these many-centuries-renowned tombs. It seemed to me very like burying these ancient monarchs in a mundane hell—so hot, dry, and desolate is the place, the very last that modern ideas would associate with befitting or honourable sepulture. But the tombs, when once they are examined, amply repay the trouble taken. Such wondrous resting-places for the dead exist nowhere else. Many have been open from the time of the Ptolemies, and it is most curious to trace upon the walls the inscriptions of visitors of the earlier eras. It shows that the indulgence of the practice is by no means a modern taste; but the ancients had not the puerile love of mere record of personal

visits by the inscription of a name: they had something to say with regard to the place, and they wrote it where it was never offensive, either in obliterating or disfiguring the sculptured or painted walls. They expressed their satisfaction by *ex votos* and inscriptions of various lengths; and it is not without a peculiar interest we look on the name of the Athenian Daduchus, of the Eleusinian mysteries, who visited Thebes in the reign of Constantine, and who dates his visit "a long time after the divine Plato." The modern records are by no means so gratifying; and we see disgusting traces of mischief and Vandalism in the whole series of tombs, all the work of the present century. The scrawling of hideous names in the most conspicuous places is the least repulsive feature: many of the cartouches, once containing royal and other names of ancient date, have been entirely obliterated, and much other mischief is imputed to an European scholar, who has been desirous that his chronologic theory should not suffer by a reference to these authorities. In other instances portions of the sculpture have been endeavoured to be removed: a deep, coarse trench has been chipped all around the edge of a figure, or perhaps round its head only, to the destruction of the larger part of the figure, and the hieroglyphics above it; and then, when the mischief has been effected, it has been

found impossible to slice away from the main wall the coveted fragment. Many of the most interesting and beautiful sculptures have been thus wantonly destroyed, and the pleasure of visiting these wondrous old tombs is much alloyed by the pain given to every right-thinking mind through such cruel and wanton mischief.

All these tombs are of great interest, but the visitor should not fail to pay more than usual attention to four of them, which may be referred to by the numbers painted over their entrances by Wilkinson, to whom all travellers owe a deep debt of gratitude, as well for his unwearied labours for good throughout Egypt as for his literary home labours, and the excellent books he has added to our libraries, they are among the few that are valued the more they are studied at home, or tested abroad. No. 2 of his list bears the name of the King Rameses IV., and is described as "a small but elegant tomb." The sculptures are all curious, but the most remarkable thing is the enormous granite sarcophagus, measuring eleven feet by seven, and more than nine feet in height. It is in one piece. The lid has a crocodile sculptured in relief upon it, and has been broken in two by the violence that forced in the side of this ponderous coffin. The mischief was probably done by Cambyses, who wantonly desecrated the temples

and tombs of Egypt. From the Greek inscriptions on its walls it is known to have been one of the seventeen open to visitors in the Ptolemaic era. No. 6 is that of Rameses VII., and contains some very strange mystic paintings connected with human life and its hopes after death, which give great insight to the Egyptian faith, its belief in a future state, where happiness or misery must be the consequence of good conduct in the present life, and shadow forth the painful difficulties that must ever beset the mind and hand of the pious sculptor who would endeavour to embody the ideas of religious mysticism. So wild and strange are many of them, that they seem almost the dreams of madmen—the human-legged and winged serpents, the various-headed gods, the awful array of wondrous beings of another world, engaged in conducting the soul, and testing the actions of the helpless, erring mortal, trembling in their stern presence. Such wondrous pictures are not to be tested by the ideas of to-day, but can only be faintly understood when we endeavour to go back to the past faith of a long-perished race. The whimsical and the grotesque then rise into the mystic and the awful; and these walls tell solemn tales of the past aspirations of man's soul:—

> "The pleasing hope, the fond desire,
> The longing after immortality."

Miss Martineau well observes that "there is left on these walls illustrations of a faith which the vulgar may take literally, or let alone as unintelligible, while to priestly eyes they once told more than we shall ever understand." Bunsen asks, "Who is to unravel for us the mute hieroglyphics of the Egyptian Pantheon? Who will lead us up to the commencements and fundamental ideas of this enigmatical development, which was a puzzle to Greeks and Romans?"

It must be in a more reverent spirit than actuates the larger number of travellers that these old tombs should be visited. A champagne pic-nic party clamorously held in their passages, as is the usual fashion, is certainly not the proper mode. The innate irreverence of European visitors is daily and painfully apparent. Miss Martineau is one of the few travellers who have the honest sense to speak boldly. Few think except as they are ordered; and fewer still express their thoughts. "Instead of endeavouring to ascertain the ideas, they revile or ridicule the manifestation, which was never meant to meet their conceptions, and can never be interpreted by them. Thus we, as a society, take upon ourselves to abhor and utterly despise the 'idolatry' of the Egyptians, without asking ourselves if we comprehend anything of the principles of Egyptian theo-

logy. The children, on their stools by our firesides, wonder eternally how people so clever could be so silly as to pay homage to crocodiles and cats; and their parents too often agree with them, instead of pointing out that there might be, and certainly were, reasons in the minds of the Egyptians which made it a very different thing with them to cherish sacred animals from what it would be in us." In our contempt for their symbolism we forget that we also adopt absurdities. Our mediæval monograms and mysticisms are not impervious to criticism; nor can good taste justify the modern and monstrous concoction of cherubs' heads with wings at the point of decapitation, where no muscles could move them, yet eternally flying, and singing without lungs!

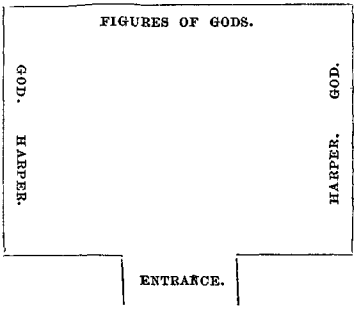
No. 9 is another of those which were open in the Roman era, and is covered with Greek and Latin inscriptions by early visitors. I do not, however, find that they ever injured anything; it has been left for the philosophers and men of the present time, and they have done it amply. It is beautifully decorated throughout, and is of great extent: the ceilings are particularly curious. A vast sarcophagus, as in No. 2, lies in fragments in the principal chamber. In it once reposed the body of the King Rameses V., whose title of Miamun may have led the Romans to term it "the tomb of Memnon."

No. 11 is the far-famed "harper's tomb" described by the ill-used traveller Bruce. It is of great extent and wonderful elaboration; its walls covered with sculpture and painting of singular interest. The name given here is that of Rameses III.

"A king, he taketh royal rest,"

and appears to have been attended in death, as in life, by the chief officers of his court, whose burial chambers are on each side of the long entrance gallery. Here the chief priest, minstrel, steward, armourer, boatman, chief cook, and other officers, had each a resting-place; the walls of their funeral rooms being beautifully decorated with representations of the emblems of their position in life. In that of the minstrel are the famous figures of harpers playing before the gods, which have been so frequently engraved and published, as remarkable for examples of the perfection to which this ancient nation had arrived in the musical art. The arrangement of the paintings upon the walls of this small chamber, which measures about six feet by eight, will be understood by our diagram. They are painted in flat tints, with a broad dark outline, upon what was once a white ground; unfortunately, the harpers have been wantonly damaged at a comparatively recent period. I was particularly anxious to

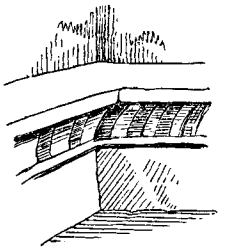
ascertain whether "one, if not both of the minstrels is blind," as Wilkinson states, and which I always doubted. They are not so depicted in the great French work on Egypt, or by Rosellini, and it seems



too much in accordance with modern association of ideas, imbibed from ballad poetry and romance; but it must be now taken on trust, according to the authority most favoured, as the features of the face of each figure are entirely obliterated, and the lower part of one harp. On the other harp (that which is surmounted by a crowned head) a silly Frenchman has inscribed his name, and written on the sounding-board the trite sentiment that "la musique" embellishes life, and dissipates *ennui*; and thus one of the most curious paintings in existence has been disfigured and ruined.

Belzoni's tomb, the first of the series, is that numbered 17. Its decorations are more exquisitely designed and painted than any other; its occupant appears to have been Sethi, the father of Rameses II.; and he seems to have been interred, and the tomb closed, before the entire series of decorations were completed. The attention of Belzoni was directed to it by the Arabs, who had noted the sinking of the soil above its entrance on the hill side. The chambers and passages extend three hundred and twenty feet into the rock, and are reached by a very steep stair; consequently visitors descend by inclined planes or staircases, leading to a chamber, where all further progress seemed to be barred to Belzoni's excavators, by a deep pit, which occupied its furthest side. This pit was, in reality, contrived not only to deceive explorating despoilers, but to act as a drain for the rain-water that sometimes descends among these hills (as I had seen it); another proof (as at Dendera, see p. 248) that the Egyptians feared these showers; and not without reason, as rain has much injured the walls and decorations of this tomb since Belzoni filled this pit. A hollow sound, emitted on striking the wall above, induced him to batter it in; and a series of magnificent halls rewarded his exertions. The first hall entered is supported by four square pillars, each side

covered with a figure of a god in *basso-relievo*, richly adorned with colour of the most brilliant hue, and with a glossy surface. This chamber has been aptly termed "the hall of beauty." In the adjoining one is a curious series of groups, depicting people of various nations and complexions. In another, is an equally remarkable series of outline drawings, exhibiting the mode in which these *bassi-relievi* were commenced. First of all, a series of lines covered the wall; they were parallel and horizontal, and crossed each other at equal distances, forming a set of squares, in which was delineated in outline the figure to be sculptured, its exact proportion being thus ensured. The form and attitude were always strictly conventional, and when completed in red colour, a master-eye went over and corrected it, if faulty, with a black line, as may be seen in some of these figures. A side chamber, to the left of the great hall, is remarkable for having a broad bench round three of its sides, cut, like the room itself, from the rock, in form like the cornice of a temple, as shown in our cut; it is about four feet from the ground. "This," says Belzoni, "I



called the 'sideboard room,' as it has a projection of three feet, in form of a sideboard, all round, which was perhaps intended to contain the articles necessary for the funeral ceremony." There are also small niches in the wall for figures of the gods. The principal chamber adjacent, he says, "I named the Bull's or Apis' room, as we found the carcase of a bull in it, embalmed with asphaltum; and also, scattered in various places, an immense quantity of small wooden figures of mummies, six or eight inches long, and covered with asphaltum to preserve them. There were other figures of fine earth, baked, coloured blue, and strongly varnished. On each side of the two little rooms were some wooden statues, standing erect, four feet high, with a circular hollow inside, as if to contain a roll of papyrus, which I have no doubt they did. We found, likewise, fragments of other statues of wood and of composition." But the grandest relic of all found here, occupied the centre of the chamber, and was placed immediately over the staircase to a long, subterraneous passage; and this was the renowned alabaster sarcophagus, elaborately covered with sculpture, afterwards brought to England by Belzoni, purchased by Sir John Soane, and still in his residence in Lincoln's Inn Square, willed by its owner to the British nation. It was impossible to stand in

this now deserted and desecrated hall, and look on its pictured walls, as the figures came dimly forth by the light of torches, without a strange feeling of its mystic solemnity. I was alone with old Achmet, whose foot-fall could not be heard, as he glided ghostlike, in his white robes, to add a few more fragments to the handful of cane-sticks he had lit upon the floor, and which gave a lurid and transient light to the roof, displaying still more strange and quaint imaginings, typical of the ancient faith. It seemed as if the ideas of antiquity were briefly shown but to bewilder us; and as the light faded, and they again flowed into darkness, it was the very realisation of the oblivious mystery that is destined to shroud them for ever. The crackling of the dying embers was succeeded by a solemn silence, and a darkness that aided serious thought. In my life I have never been more impressed than during those few minutes.

"The kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, each in his own house," are the grand words of Isaiah: was there ever a more noble illustration of Scripture phraseology in its literal truthfulness than this tomb affords? in which a monarch, at once the chief of his people and the high priest of his faith, rests with the most sacred things connected therewith.

It is incomprehensible to me how scholars and gentlemen can raise a rude hand to destroy, as well as despoil, these royal resting-places. I have noted this desecration elsewhere, but in Belzoni's tomb still worse mischief has been done. The beauty of its workmanship has been "a fatal beauty" here also, and the hand of the spoiler has fallen heavily upon it. Champollion abstracted many fine slabs, and destroyed the general effect of its noblest parts. The square columns that support its roof have been in some places literally chipped to pieces, and a rude irregular core only remains where sculptures and painting of unrivalled beauty once existed. If the rude hand of mischief had been directed by the slightest judgment—if the faces had been sawn in slabs from the substance, and so carried to European museums—some excuse might be framed; but what has been done here, as well as the way in which it has been effected, surely is too bad: it is inexcusable and vulgar barbarity. It is much to be regretted that this should have been done, to the discredit of science, during the three years that the Prussian scientific expedition remained in Egypt. "Everywhere this body made free use of the hammer and the crow-bar," says a recent writer. It was by Lepsius' orders that one of the two beautiful pillars supporting the roof of the small sepul-

chral chamber leading from the great hall of this tomb was roughly broken down, the lower portion smashed to fragments, the upper at last falling, and when down, having been found to be too large for removal through the door, left in hideous ruin on the floor. The reckless stupidity of this proceeding is equal in reality to Goldsmith's invented absurdity of the Vicar of Wakefield's family picture, too large to pass through any door of his house.

It was with a great sense of relief on getting to the open air, that our guide proposed to return by a short cut "over the Gebel," and avoid a return by the horrible valley. Up the rough mountain side we immediately ascended; the horses and donkeys clambering, even better than the bipeds, the steep, rough, shingly slopes. A false step might in some places have been fatal to any of us. On reaching the summit, a cool north wind relieved us from the heat of the limestone around. Here some circular mounds, formed of rough pieces of rock, mark a series of Coptic graves. Passing them, you arrive at the edge of a precipitous descent, and the plain of Thebes is suddenly revealed, a grand and wonderful sight! Far below, lie ruined towers and temples; the green plain, with the vast colossi now dwindled to toy-like images; the noble river winding in the midst; on the opposite bank, Karnac

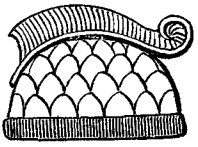
and Luxor, the distance bounded by the Arabian mountains.

> "Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
> A sight so touching in its majesty."

I could readily fancy an old Egyptian bringing a stranger to this spot to overwhelm him with surprise when "the hundred-gated Thebes" was in all its glory, and the "Lybian suburb" below us crowded with temples and palaces. From this high point an excellent view is obtained of the mounds which once enclosed the sacred lake beyond Medinet-Abou, across which the dead were ferried in the funeral barge, accompanied by the pomp that religion and wealth occasionally displayed. The descent of the hill is more difficult than the ascent, a narrow winding ledge without any support or defence from a false footstep, is all that aids the traveller's course. About midway the rocks are quarried into mummy-pits and funereal caves. The men of the district are continually searching them for antiquities to sell to visitors, and the bodies, rudely broken up, are flung about the cliffs, with torn rags fluttering around them, in ghastly confusion.

At last we reached level ground, and trotted to the right, to the palace-temple of Medinet-Abou, one of the most interesting buildings in Egypt, a

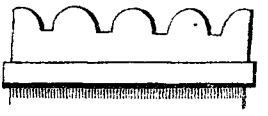
pile that has been added to by the Egyptian monarchs through a long succession of years, and bears names from the early days of Thothmes II. (B.C. 1464) down to those of Antoninus Pius, who added the columns and screens to the northern end of the temple. It is therefore an epitome of Egyptian art and history, while the palatial residence beside it is unique as a specimen of the royal home of its sovereigns. Like all buildings thus added to and altered in a long succession of years, its general plan is somewhat confused; but its sculptured walls are sufficient to repay any attention devoted to them, and much of the manners and customs, wars, and religion of the old world, may be studied there. Some of the hieroglyphics are cut with singular boldness to the depth of six inches. All the pictorial scenes are of much interest, and retain traces of the colour which once made these walls as resplendent as the illuminated pages of a mediæval manuscript. There is an occasional conventional treatment of the objects thus delineated, but a little thought will make them clear. One is here selected as a specimen; it might at first sight be taken for a helmet surmounted by a feather, but is in fact a rush basket, piled with ripe



figs, covered with a green palm leaf, as is still the usage in Egypt, and is one of a series of offerings placed before the gods. The battle scenes here are of much interest, from the minutiæ of their details. Some enthusiastic students, who have become attached to the ancient Egyptians by studying their civilisation, seek to prove them to have been better than they display themselves. The heaps of hands, and other members of the bodies of their enemies, here piled before the victorious king; as well as the representations elsewhere of the king sacrificing groups of unfortunate captives, or blinding them by coolly thrusting his spear into their eyes; is sufficient to show that the refinement of the Egyptians, like that of the modern Asiatics, may co-exist with revolting and merciless cruelty. It is not by any means clear that the human sacrifices, represented on tombs and temples, are to be explained away in their favour as merely symbolical, if we are to take all other representations as literally true pictures of their every-day life.

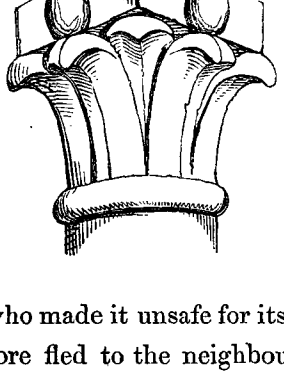
That portion of the ruin which formed the palace of the fourth Rameses is a tall tower-like building, containing many small rooms, all decorated with sculptures, representing among other things the monarch in his harem, playing chess or draughts with the ladies of his court. The architectural

details of this building are very curious and valuable, the building being much more perfect than usual, even to the embattlements, which are of that semi-circular form seen upon ancient Egyptian and Assyrian sculpture. Our cut exhibits the summit of one of these towers.



The grand court of the temple is very fine in its character and proportions. The pillars are in the massive antique taste, square, or like bundles of water-plants, believed by Wilkinson to represent the papyrus, and not the lotus, as generally supposed. The colour, which once decorated them entirely, has been preserved to a considerable extent, and the court "may be looked upon as one of the finest which adorn the various temples of Egypt," says the authority just quoted. At an early period the Christians of the Greek church converted it into a place for their own worship, and a line of columns, in advance of the Egyptian series, surround the interior, and were used to support the rafters inserted in the ancient entablature. The capital of one of these columns is engraved on the next page. The smaller apartments, which held the shrines of the Egyptian gods, became the habitation of the Christian priests, and

the sculptures which covered the walls were carefully plastered with mud or stucco, forming a groundwork for the rude distemper pictures of saints and martyrs which succeeded them. The village, during the time of the Lower Empire, was of considerable size, and the residence of a bishop. It declined with the inroads of the Arabs, who made it unsafe for its timid inmates; they therefore fled to the neighbourhood of Esné. The large group of ruined residences that now crowd the vicinity of the temple prove its size and importance, and at a distance still give it the aspect of a large inhabited settlement.



There is a small, but beautiful little temple, situated in a secluded valley immediately behind the palace-temple just described. It is known as Dayr-el-Medeeneh, and was once also used as a Christian church. It was begun by the later Greek rulers of Egypt, and finished by their Roman successors. In its construction, wooden dovetails, or cramps of sycamore, have been extensively employed to connect the stones, which are in many places disjointed; and

the walls rent, in consequence of excavations made too near them. The entire measurement of the temple is only 60 feet by 33; it was enclosed by a wall, the brick being laid in concave and convex courses alternately. Near it are mounds bounding the great lake, to which attention was directed in describing the view from the summit of the hill behind. The tombs of the Egyptian queens are in a small valley still more to the northward; they are the least interesting of the entire series on this side the Nile. They are in a most ruined and injured condition, from the effect of fires which have destroyed their contents and obliterated their sculptures,—the desecrating work of the Persian conqueror, Cambyses, whose vindictive revenge on the Thebans for their resistance to his invasion led him to destroy as much as he could of all that they held sacred.

The reader will gather from these brief descriptions of the remains on this western bank of the Nile, that the old "Libyan suburb" (as the ancients termed it) has the most varied series of buildings, covering a much larger surface, and occupying more time in investigation, than the opposite shore. But now, to use Belzoni's words, "after having described the tombs, the mummies, the rocks, *and the rogues* of Gournou, it is time to cross the Nile, and return to Karnac." We will therefore imagine the river

crossed, and the town of Luxor left behind, as we emerge on the plain, with the ruins of Karnac about three miles and a half distant. The village we pass midway is characterised by all that squalor and dust so disagreeably prevalent in Egypt. A short distance beyond, and the remains of the grand avenue of sphinxes are seen leading to the gate of Karnac. They are much mutilated, but their design is apparent, consisting of seated ram-headed sphinxes of colossal proportion, each bearing a small figure of the king between its fore-paws. They terminate at a noble gateway, nearly eighty feet in height, covered with sculptures representing the King Ptolemy Evergetes, and his sister-wife Berenice, sacrificing to the gods. Passing through this, another line of sphinxes leads to the propylæum of an isolated temple, which again connects itself with the centre of the more ancient and imposing great hall, the most colossal work of its kind in Egypt. We therefore thus enter by a side way, and not by the principal one, which faced the river (the stream about a mile distant), and from which an avenue of human-headed sphinxes lined the road up to the spacious courtyard, with its gigantic propylæum, before which were placed obelisks and colossal statues. Then the visitor entered a hall, the proportions of which well befitted the grandeur of its approach. Here so vast an

assemblage of ruins awaits the inspection of the traveller, that a bewildering sense of quantity and confusion is the first thing he feels; and it is not until he has time for a little reflection, and the experience of reducing all into a proper order, that he can comprehend what he has come so far to see. Karnac, the most wonderful assemblage of ruins, perhaps, at present existing, is so broken up into vast masses of stone, its various halls and courts so mixed up and confused in the *débris*, that it is long before it resolves itself into anything like its pristine form. It is here we begin for the first time to see a work of great utility begun, and still continuing, under the auspices of the Egyptian government. It is the clearing of these ruins of the vast accumulation of earth and sand which has half buried them for ages. What the labour has been may be guessed from the mounds of earth, that look like railway embankments, as they stretch from the great towers of the temple towards the river. All this encumbered the ruins; but principally buried the vast courtyard in front of the great hall. These excavations were only concluded the year before last. The Pasha had intended to hold a *fête* in this court, on his way to Esné, and amuse himself by witnessing the games with horse and spear for which the Arabs are so famed; but he did not stay, for some of the

capricious reasons which guide the erratic course of Eastern potentates. Still the good was done, and the ruins cleared. It was, however, done in the usual tyrannic style. An impressment of the peasantry of the surrounding villages was made, and the forced labour of one thousand hands thus secured; the order was a sudden one, and the work had to be undertaken and completed as quickly. The people laboured continuously, and in eighteen days the work was effected. The poor people thus unjustly taxed are not paid, or even fed; nor are they provided with proper working tools. They bring with them a rush basket, and sometimes the pick with which they labour in the fields; with the latter they pull down the earth into the baskets, which they raise to their shoulders, and so carry it off; but many have no pick, and then they are compelled to scratch the earth into their baskets with their fingers, under the surveillance of government officials, who lie and smoke all day, looking on the labourer, and occasionally applying the *courbash*, a whip of hippopotamus hide, to his shoulders, if he flag at his work. No such thing as a spade or barrow aids them in carrying their heavy burdens, nor have they a plank to aid their ascent of the dusty mounds, which they increase as they toil on. A bit of coarse bread, sometimes boiled with a few lentils, is their

food, plain water their drink; at night they wrap themselves in their rags, and make the earth their bed.

The mischief done to Karnac was chiefly effected by the vindictive Cambyses, as well as by after sieges and earthquakes; but the defacement of the fine historic sculptures is the work of the more modern Turks, who dislike representations of the human form; hence their bullets have battered the faces of men and gods until they have too frequently become almost an indistinguishable mass of shot holes. This is the more to be regretted, as they are among the finest examples of the best era of Egyptian art, the reign of Rameses II. (B.C. 1311-1245). Nothing can exceed the delicacy and beauty of execution which characterise these early works; and the historic scenes on the outer walls of the great hall are unrivalled in interest as representations of the "panoply of war," and all its most minute incidents at this era. It is much to be regretted that M. Mariette, the present superintendent of the Pasha's museum and works, should have committed the grievous error of obscuring a large part of the most interesting of these sculptures. The earth excavated in the vicinity has been piled against the wall in a manner perfectly inexcusable; there is waste ground enough opposite these very walls.

Surely Egypt is very unfortunate in never obtaining a scholar who can reverently preserve her wondrous monuments. I spoke warmly on the beauty and interest of these old historic sculptures to the intelligent old man who was my guide. "They are continued there," said he, pointing to the rubbish-laden wall beyond; "but I can see them no more," he added, in tones as regretful as any true antiquary would utter at this careless and wanton proceeding.

The recent excavations have brought to light some new chambers, exhumed walls with Osiride columns, revealed avenues of sphinxes, which formed the approach to the temple from various quarters; and will, if properly conducted, aid us to a clearer comprehension of this, the greatest national edifice of the old world. But it behoves M. Mariette to be careful in his labours. If we are only to obtain one thing by the obliteration of another, he may do more harm than good, inasmuch as his discoveries may not equal our losses; and we would even now recommend him to employ labourers to remove the rubbish he has thrown against the finest and most interesting portions of the building.

It is fortunate for us that this ancient people delighted to record in pictured form "the story of their life from year to year," and thus give us—what we could obtain by no other means—a perfect notion

of their manners and customs. The valuable history of Herodotus sinks into comparative insignificance before this complete revelation of the arts, public and private, of this grand old nation. Their temples, tombs, and palaces thus serve a double purpose: they are illustrated volumes descriptive of long-past ages. There we behold their mystic gods, or see (enthralled by the strange fascination of the study) the wild and wondrous imaginings that crowd the walls, and endeavour to portray the deep mystery of man's life, here, and hereafter. The great events that made Egypt glorious, also find a pictured record; we see the sovereign sally forth to war, we view the armed phalanx, we see the carnage of the battle, we look upon the heaps of slain; and when we see the king again return victorious, captives of all countries are brought before him, the slain are recounted by the scribes, and heaps of dissevered hands are piled from the defunct bodies of his enemies before his throne. We may then study him in his retirement, playing draughts with his queen, or hunting with his trained panthers in chariots of Oriental magnificence, or fishing in his lakes, or sailing in his decorated barge on the ever-loved river which his people deify. Thus much is done for the history of the land and its rulers; but even more has been done for its people, inasmuch as

the tombs present a series of representations of the occupations of every-day life, so vivid, truthful, and various, that from them we have a clearer insight of what the scenes were that constantly met the eye in this favoured land even before Moses knew it, and are the better able to understand from them the habits, manners, and civilisation of the people than those of our own countrymen in the comparatively recent days of the Saxon heptarchy, or, perhaps, even during the middle ages, from what they have left to us. Our knowledge of the high state of art and luxury in this favoured region three thousand years ago is thus obtained, not merely from the statements of the most ancient writers, sacred and profane, but from an examination of the monuments left by the people themselves; and not the least extraordinary feature in these ancient works is the exquisite beauty they frequently possess—a beauty that decreases only as they approach comparatively modern times. Thus the sculptures of the era of Moses are far finer, more truthful, delicate and beautiful than those of the reign of the Ptolemies; and these again are more so than those which were produced under Roman rule.

The vast columns of the great hall are covered with hieroglyphics, and figures of the king sacrificing to the god Khem, the deity of generation, to whose

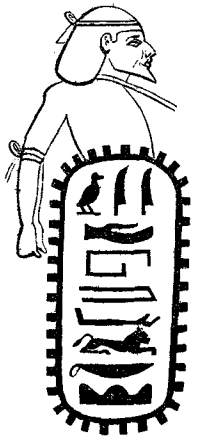
F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc.

Vincent Brooks Imp.

GREAT HALL, KARNAC.

worship the temple was devoted, and whose mundane influence made him one of the most important deities of paganism. These columns are of much elegance, and are still brilliant with fragments of the colour which once richly decorated them. The gigantic character of this noble hall will be best comprehended by Wilkinson's measurements. It is 170 feet by 320 feet; each column is 62 feet high, exclusive of plinth and abacus, and 11 feet 6 inches in diameter. At each side of the central avenue were placed seven lines of smaller columns; but only small by contrast, being 42 feet 5 inches in height, and 28 inches in circumference. Plate XV., sketched from one side of the centre of this hall, shows three pillars in advance of the grand central series, looking through the side court on the fallen column, which is so effective a termination to the view through its doorway. There are one hundred and twenty-two of these lesser columns; the massive roof which they once supported is gone, but the colossal character of its stones may be inferred from the space between each column, as well as from those in other parts of the building, the lintels of the doorway being 40 feet 10 inches in length. We know the Egyptians were a small race of men, or we might infer from their works that they were a race of giants.

Passing through this hall we come to a smaller gateway, isolated temples and sanctuaries, most confusing to the visitor, who has frequently to clamber over masses of stone to reach them. In a narrow passage to the right is a sculptured record of the conquests of Sheshonk, the Shishak of Scripture, which is of the greatest interest, and was first pointed out by Champollion in a hurried visit he paid to the ruins on his way to Nubia. It occurs in the third line of a row of sixty-three prisoners presented by the agency of the god Amunra to Sheshonk, who thus, as usual, attributes his victories to Divine influence. Each figure, or rather half-figure, has his arms tied behind him, a rope round the neck, and is placed upon a turretted oval, indicative of a walled city, within which is the name. In this instance it is "Judah Melek," the king of Judah, the Rehoboam of Scripture, whom Sheshonk deposed; this is, therefore, the only *direct* illustration of Scripture history the monuments of Egypt present to our view. *Indirect,* but most valuable illustrations abound,



as already explained. But even this must not be taken as a true portrait of the king, but the conventional type used as indicative of an Asiatic; for, in reference to the companion figures, we shall find them all cast in one mould, with nothing but national individualism, of the broadest kind, to distinguish them.

This great temple was the pride of old Egypt; all its rulers vied with each other in adding to, and decorating it. When Cambyses, after a protracted siege of three years, conquered Thebes, he wildly revenged himself on the Thebans, destroying this then famous temple, and Thebes itself, as much as lay in human power to do. After this fatal desecration, though a few repairs were occasionally attempted, the temple and the town sank gradually to oblivion.

Vast ruins stretch on all sides from these central halls; and if the roof of one be ascended, the visitor may obtain the best idea of what must have been the original effect of that grand assemblage, a few ruined fragments being still the most astounding group of building in the world. Halls, temples, sanctuaries, cells, obelisks, statues, crowd upon the eye in bewildering confusion—the vast tank outside, and the boundary walls, the long lines of sphinxes, and the temples at Medamot and Luxor, completing the

distant survey. The former of the temples lies inland to the east, and consists of little more than the portico; it is first visited by travellers who come to Thebes from the Red Sea, by way of Cosseir, but there is nothing in it to deserve a journey from Karnac.

Karnac is less infested by begging natives than usual, and so are the Theban ruins generally. The custom—a good one—of securing native guides, and paying them a fixed fee, prevents this annoyance. Both guides and donkey-boys are here extremely intelligent and amusing. I had one of the latter *genus* who knew a little of many languages; he was barely fourteen, but was engaged to be married the next year. He had picked up his words from travellers, and always had his ears open to a new phrase. He had been much delighted by some sentimental lady who had continually used the word *exquisite*, to characterise Karnac; and he was delighted in repeating it, broken in two by a sudden accent on the *x*, and rendered absurd by a hiss on the *s*. On returning from the ruins he kept up a continual talk, as he ran by the donkey's side, after this fashion :—"Ingleez mi-Lord say Karnac *taib*—good—very fine! Ingleez mi-Lady say 'Ex-quizzit Karnac'—yes—Ex-quizzit! Mine good donkey—him called Captain Slick—me Mustapha—yes—good boy—you give *backsheesh*. Good donkey—oh yes!

—*him better than steamboat!*" This was the grand climax of donkey-boy's similes.

Luxor is much encumbered with buildings of a modern kind, and buried in sand to a great depth, so that the seated figures of colossi in front of the towers are covered to their necks in it. One of the obelisks now stands in the centre of the *Place de la Concorde,* in Paris; it would be well if the other were removed, for it looks particularly awkward alone; but England cannot afford money or enthusiasm for this, or much else that an intellectual nation should do. The towers are much decayed, and the sculptures delineating the wars of Rameses are partially obliterated. Within the great court, a mosque, and a perfect colony of dirty hovels, surmounted by high pigeon-towers, prevent its due examination. Passing through this, we ultimately reach the line of double columns (part of the great hall) in front of the British consul's house. The various chambers beyond are used as granaries, or are appropriated as underground stores for a house built at the extremity. There is one very interesting apartment, which has been converted, in later Roman time, into a hall of audience or justice; the hieroglyphical walls have been covered by stucco, and upon that a series of pictures painted, with an imitation dado of coloured marbles under them.

From the costumes I should judge them to be of the fifth or sixth century, as they resemble the paintings and mosaics of that era in Italy. Corinthian columns of porphyry stand in advance of an arched recess, which has been broken into the older walls; within is painted three togated figures, the central one having a long wand or sceptre in the right hand. An equestrian procession, of which few traces remain, is on one side; and the fragments of some elaborately-dressed figures on the other, resembling those of the late Byzantine emperors. Where the stucco is broken away, the original Egyptian *bassi-relievi* come forth, and there is a calm and finished beauty about them worthy of attention.

I felt here what I have often felt elsewhere—that the great art of a nation, or the great work of a master, can only be fully known and valued when seen in its own country, or its native place. Carried elsewhere, or disunited from its proper adjuncts, it is always deteriorated. The calm, glowing sunlight of Egypt gives to the vast figures, in *bassi-relievi*, a softness and beauty they could not receive elsewhere. They are like gigantic *camei*, and as delicate and as lovely. The sharpness, cleanness and warmth of tint, also bestowed by the wondrous atmosphere of Egypt, completely change the character of these

ancient works from what they receive in our gloomy land, and gloomier British Museum. In the same way pictures dissevered, like the Madonna di San Sisto at Dresden, from the architectural and sacred adjuncts amid which they were designed to be placed, are by that much diminished in effect, and injured as compositions. Nothing but a visit, not even a plaster cast well placed, can give an idea of Michael Angelo's statue of Lorenzo de Medici, in the chapel at Florence; it wants its surroundings in the grand and gloomy mausoleum, with the light playing on it, as its creator designed it to be placed. Museums and picture-galleries are too often wearisome collections of *disjecta membra,* contradicting, and clashing with each other; and the moderns have not scrupled to destroy, in forming them, much that the ancients would have reverenced, and willingly have gone a long pilgrimage to see.

CHAPTER IX.

THEBES TO EDFOU.

LET us now imagine our sails set, our rowers in their places, the gun fired as a parting salute to the useful and friendly Mustapha Aga, our worthy consul, and that we for a time bid adieu to Thebes, and resume our course up the river. In looking back on the Theban plain, as you leave it, you are more impressed by its beauties. Luxor, for a foreground, to the right, the vast colossi and Medinet-Abou to the left, backed by the noble and picturesque hills, is certainly a striking scene.

The river takes a sudden bend, and you lose the view in a few minutes, and are again hemmed in by mud banks and monotonous lines of date palms. The first place demanding attention is Erment, the Hermonthis of the Greeks; and here are the remains of a temple, which, like that of Dendera, was founded by the famous Cleopatra, having also the

smaller temple, or "lying-in chamber" of the goddess Reto, as described in our notes on that place. This ruin is about six miles from Medinet-Abou; and some travellers who make Thebes a long halting or final resting-place, ride to it over the plain. It is some distance from the river, but is picturesque in its situation. David Roberts has an excellent view of it in his great work on Egypt and the Holy Land. Frith's photographs of Erment exhibit this temple, with a heap of rubbish in the foreground of the scene, consisting solely of chips from blocks, which have been very recently abstracted from the ancient building, to be broken up and dressed for modern use. The large temple has long since disappeared, and the smaller one is much ruined. The columns of the exterior court have, with one exception, disappeared; those of the hall beyond are but few in number; the ancient shrines, still farther, consist of two small chambers, their massive walls of stone serving to support the residence of the sheikh of the village, the entire ruin being encumbered by the mud huts of the villagers and a plain mosque. The modern village is an insufferable accumulation of dust and filth, and naked, clamorous children. Some sheikhs' tombs are in close contiguity, and not far from them are the ruins of a Christian church, of early foundation and

considerable size. Wilkinson gives its measurement as a hundred and ninety feet in length, by eighty-five in width, and considers it as a work of the time of the Lower Empire. The walls are massive and the columns large, proving it to have been the careful work of time; so that Christianity must have been firmly and quietly established here. The destruction of the church followed that of the religious communities on the Nile, when the Turks became masters.

Cleopatra and her son are again represented upon the walls of this temple, but not so well displayed as at Dendera. In one instance she is seen worshiping the sacred bull. All the sculptures are inferior to those on earlier buildings; and the eye, accustomed to the exquisite works of Karnac, Luxor, and Medinet-Abou, will at once detect the vast difference in the feeling and execution of these monuments, and the later Ptolemaic and Roman art. The distinction may be made by calling the latter *art*, merely; whilst the former deserves to be only spoken of as *fine art*. Between the building of Karnac and Erment fourteen hundred years had elapsed; art, though protected by the most rigid rule of composition, and therefore in the most narrowed spirit of religious conservatism, had failed to preserve that delicacy of beauty which it possessed in the days of Rameses II. Many persons cannot allow beauty

to very early art, as seen in the monuments of Egypt and Assyria. Like all other beauties, it must be studied to be felt, or even discovered; but it is certainly more easily discovered in the land for which it was designed. An apt, though coarse, illustration of this fact is indicated in a simile I may be pardoned for quoting:—"A lady's eye is a beautiful thing; but take the most beautiful from its socket, and hand it for inspection on the purest crystal dish, would it delight or even gratify the most enthusiastic?" Works of art are often in this position. It is ill tampering with the continuity of design in any great building by the abstraction of any of its parts; and these parts, though consisting of statues or bas-reliefs, will not fail to suffer also by the disseverance. I have endeavoured to enforce this opinion at the conclusion of the last chapter. Warburton, in his "Crescent and Cross," confirms it when speaking of the obelisks of Egypt:—"Those who have only seen them at Rome or Paris, can form no conception of their effect, where all around is in keeping with them. The eye follows upward the finely tapering shaft, till suddenly it seems not to terminate but to melt away and lose itself in the dazzling sunshine of its native skies."

"Crocodilopis," says Wilkinson, "is the next town mentioned by Strabo, on the western bank after

Hermonthis. Its site is uncertain; but it may have been at the Gebel-Ain, where the vestiges of an ancient town appear on the hill nearest the river, and where I observed some grottoes, whose paintings have long since been destroyed."

Gebel-Ain is a striking object, rising from the plain like one of the Mediterranean islands. It is unique in Nile scenery, and reminds the traveller of that of the Rhine, Moselle, or Danube. The stratification of the rock near this place is singular, and those seen on the opposite banks are of wild and picturesque form. On passing them a large island of sand soon appears; it is a favourite resting-place for crocodiles, who occasionally bask in groups upon its surface, lying as if dead in the hot sun. They are almost invariably attended by the little bird, which ancient (and some modern) authors assert to be its guardian while sleeping, and the friendly disturber of

its slumbers when danger is near. It is the *Charadrius melanocephalus* of Linnæus, termed *Ziczac* by modern Egyptians, a name, as before observed, imitated from the note it utters when alarmed. Herodotus and Pliny, as well as the natural historians of the middle ages—who delighted in wonders, and much preferred them to simple facts—gave it as a truth that this little bird lived upon the leeches which adhered to the throat of the crocodile, and added to the feast by picking its teeth; in grateful return for these favours it watched the monster's rest, and apprised him of danger in good time for escape. The story has a better foundation than many others told of birds and beasts, with all the confidence of truth, before the more critical and scientific observation of modern students had dispelled these myths. It would be difficult now to write seriously about "that rare bird, the phœnix," or to believe that the ostrich dined off, and fattened on, horseshoes and hobnails; yet the fact is avowed by the naturalists of the middle ages, and the bird may be seen thus feeding in a drawing in Queen Mary's Psalter, now among the Royal Manuscripts in our British Museum (2 B vii.): but, waiving all ancient authors, let us listen to a modern, who tells his tale well. It is the Hon. Mr. Curzon, whose book has been already quoted, p. 124, and in which he thus records his

experience of the crocodile and its winged guardian. He had got within ten feet of a crocodile asleep on a bank. "I was on the point of firing at his eye, when I observed that he was attended by a bird called a zic-zac. It is of the plover species, of a greyish colour, and as large as a small pigeon. The bird was walking up and down close to the crocodile's nose. I suppose I moved, for suddenly it saw me, and instead of flying away, as any respectable bird would have done, he jumped about a foot from the ground, screamed 'Zic-zac! zic-zac!' with all the powers of his voice, and dashed himself against the crocodile's face two or three times. The great beast started up, and immediately spying his danger, made a jump up into the air, and dashing into the water with a splash which covered me with mud, he dived into the river and disappeared. The zic-zac, to my increased admiration, proud apparently of having saved his friend, remained walking up and down, uttering his cry, as I thought, with an exulting voice, and standing every now and then on the tops of his toes in a conceited manner, which made me justly angry with his impertinence. After having waited in vain for some time, to see whether the crocodile would come out again, I got up from the bank where I was lying, threw a clod of earth at the zic-zac, and came back to the boat, feeling some

consolation for the loss of my game in having witnessed a circumstance the truth of which has been disputed by several writers on natural history."

I might give my own experience as a corroboration of this pleasant dreaming in natural history, for certainly I have seen these birds busied about sleeping crocodiles, and clamouring at any boat's approach in a sufficiently loud manner to waken them, and teach them that their only safety is in flight. On the bank just alluded to I saw seven at one time, of various sizes, one at least fourteen feet long, others varying from six to twelve feet, all lying like great black slugs, but all awoke by the cries of the birds, as they jumped up and down on the sands near them; then waddling or rolling into the water, long before a shot could touch them. The real solution of the story seems to be very simple. The bird is attracted to the crocodile by the flies and insects which settle about the sleeping monster; and its own alarm at the approach of man, induces the cries which are imagined to be entirely for the benefit of its supposed friend.

There is little to command attention on the river until we reach Esné, where there are noble remains of the temple once sacred to the ram-headed deity, Kneph. This structure would well repay the trouble of excavation; at present the

portico only has been cleared; that was done by command of the late Mohamed Ali, when he visited Esné in 1842, the palace here being his favourite residence when he wished to escape from the cares of Cairo. It is situated in beautiful gardens close to the river, and is the first object seen by the voyager on approaching Esné. The ancient temple stands, unfortunately, in the midst of the town, and the ground has risen all around nearly as high as the capitals of its columns. You consequently descend to this cleared portico as into a vault; the rest is buried entirely, and the houses of the town are built over it.

The temple of Esné is the only place in Egypt where the traveller is free to think alone, untroubled by crowds of idle starers, and undisturbed by the everlasting request for *backsheesh*. You reach it by a sort of alley, and the entry is closed by gates; a key is kept by a regular custodian, who, of course, has his fee, and attends to you, but takes good care to lock out the dirty drove of beggars who follow. As the stair is approached by which you descend to the hall, you see only the frieze above it, and are on a level with the capitals of the columns. The vast hall is very solemn and imposing; the pillars that support its roof are covered with sculpture, the capitals very varied and beautiful. Indeed, this grand apart-

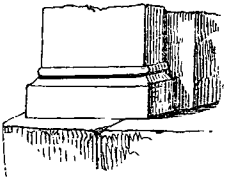
ment is unequalled among the later Egyptian works: it is one of the latest, for the names of the emperors Tiberius, Germanicus, and Vespasian, occur in the dedicatory inscription over the entrance; and those of Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus, in the interior. The doors leading from it are now blocked up, and this is all that can be seen of the temple; it is probable that the buried portion may be much older, and that this, like the portico of Dendera, may have been a later addition. Like that, it contains upon its ceiling a zodiac, and Wilkinson says that on either side of the front row of columns are several lines of hieroglyphics, "which are interesting from their containing the names of the Egyptian months." It has frequently been used as a granary, sometimes as a powder magazine; and we may, perhaps, attribute the carefulness with which it is guarded, to the fact of its being a convenient government store-house.

Emerging from the dim hall to the broad glare of an Egyptian sun, a turn to the left takes the visitor to the great square, where a most busy and picturesque scene meets the eye. It abounds in open shops and coffee-houses; barbers' establishments, gaily furnished with looking-glasses, and generally filled with customers; and stalls with fruit and vegetables on the ground in the centre. A mosque

on one side, a bazaar on the other, compose a varied picture, enlivened by crowds of active people in much variety of costume, which is most generally of very brilliant tints. It is a capital study of life in Upper Egypt. The bazaar offers but few attractive articles, the dealers merely sell such ordinary things as a poor population requires; but a stroll through it is not without interest to one who desires to see what the wants and luxuries of the husbandmen of Egypt are. A bazaar and a market will not only furnish amusement, but instruction, to any traveller in any country who wishes to learn the habits of the people; and nowhere else can he learn them so quickly.

Passing through the bazaar, narrow dusty lanes, winding between the dull mud walls of houses, conduct to the open ground between the Pasha's palace and the town,—a pleasant breathing place, completely sheltered by palm trees, open to the river, and commanding fine views of the stony hills on the opposite side of the Nile. In front of the town are the remains of a stone quay of the Roman era, now much ruined by the effect of the annual inundations, which have dislodged and washed away many of the stones. Mr. Bankes is said to have discovered a Greek inscription upon it, recording the time of its erection. I examined it very carefully, but could find nothing of the sort remaining. The

stones had evidently been obtained from older Egyptian buildings, as upon several of them hieroglyphics and portions of figures of deities occurred. Some of the blocks measure four feet in length, by two and a-half in width, and are two feet thick; they are neatly squared, and fitted without mortar. Upon the platform one course of the stones of a superstructure remained, and the base of a pilaster was attached to it, which I here engrave *(ex pede Herculem)*, as it is so evidently Roman work; and the inundation of the present year may have carried away this last vestige of its architectural character.



The town lies high, but the river encroaches upon it yearly. The bank is a soft soil, which easily becomes soaked by the river; the crude brick walls of the houses are as easily cracked, lacking due support; and all of them on the water side have been broken away by the fall of the banks when the Nile rises, and you can see into the rooms; while here and there the masses of wall which once closed them in, lie in confused heaps on the side of the hill, or in the stream. The town is consequently most unpicturesque, when seen from the river, and the

large line of shattered houses give it a most melancholy aspect. At a distance town and hill look together like one heap of mud.

The general landing-quay is at the other or southern side of the town, and is usually gay and lively, with native boats of all sorts and sizes, lading and unlading the produce of the country, or the luxuries brought from Cairo. Coffee-shops are, of course, established near; and the neighbouring houses are the homes of dancing-girls, who speedily make their appearance when a new boat arrives. They have learnt English enough, in one word, to ply their trade; and tinkle their castanets, shake their hips, and exclaim, "Dance? dance?" in the hopes of being hired to exhibit their performances. The splendour of their costume, and the profusion of gold ornaments they wear, contrast strangely with the dirty hovels they inhabit.

The late Mohamed Ali, in a fit of virtuous enthusiasm, as some say, banished these girls, in 1834, from Cairo to this distant town; but as he often came to his favourite residence here, others say, that he fixed upon this spot for his own gratification; conceding to the complaints which had been made of their outrageous impudence (and which must have been great to call for remark), in the true Oriental mode, not by repression, but transportation, taking

care, however, that they were convenient to him when he chose to select the best for his *fantasias*, as the Egyptians style such dancing parties. But another, and probably the truest explanation of all is, that the Moollahs, or chief priests, objected to the monopoly of these ladies' services by Europeans, who came to Cairo in large numbers, and generally made a point of hiring them to dance. It was not the impropriety of the dance, or dancers, that was objected to, but that "infidel" wealth should secure their attractions. So they were sent to Esné, with a small government stipend, as compensation for the "vested interests" of which they were deprived. Esné consequently abounds with them; but they are gradually creeping north, and even at Cairo may be obtained, *sub rosa*, to dance at private houses.

While we were at Esné we had an opportunity of seeing a *fantasia* of this kind, executed by the best of the sisterhood. The deck of a *dahabeah* was closed in by sails, making a convenient saloon, and lighted by hanging lanthorns; and a small party from various European boats made up, to occupy one end, the crew, captain, and dragoman being seated round the canvas walls. Four musicians grouped themselves on the ground, and played on the *rabab* (a peculiar violin with two coarse strings, and a very small apparatus for sound, so that the amount of

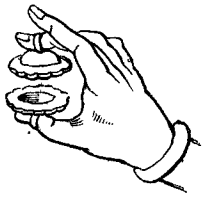
hard scraping requisite to bring out a tune is very considerable), the *nay* (a reed flute), the *darabooka drum* (beaten with the fingers), and tambourine. The tunes played possessed that monotony so wearisome to a northern and so delightful to a southern ear. These performers are generally connected by marriage with the dancing girls, their position being by no means a degraded though not a respected one. There is, indeed, an odd sort of toleration felt towards them by the better classes, so that they are engaged at weddings and feasts; and their presence known, and their dances witnessed, by ladies, at times, behind latticed windows. Among the middle classes there is less restraint, and ordinary persons display no derogatory behaviour whatever; nor is the position of the husband lowered—so contemptuously treated as it would be by ourselves—though he is, in reality, in the position of servitor to his wife. I have already alluded to the richness of the dress worn by these girls, the pink and yellow silks, gold threads, and embroidery, which make up their toilette, and the large amount of gold ornaments they wear. Here the ladies were more than usually resplendent. One of them wore five necklaces of different lengths, so that as they fell from her neck, her breast was entirely covered with them. They were so arranged that the golden beads were enlarged

as they succeeded each other, while to the lowermost hung large pendent ornaments, formed like the bean pod; and which Lane says are called, from their peculiar form, *sha'eér*, which signifies barley. Nose-rings and ear-rings of large proportion also decorated them; and their hair was covered at top by the small

red cap, or *ckoors*, a plate of thin gold, below which it is allowed to hang in a series of small plaits, to which gold coins or small circular ornaments are attached. I have endeavoured to give an idea of this costume in the above sketch. The waist is girdled by a rich shawl. The feet are bare, when dancing.

The style of their dancing was precisely similar to that already described at Kench fair. It no doubt preserves very ancient features; and as the song tunes of the Nile boatmen probably give us the music originally composed and sung many hundred years ago, the movements of these girls may display the graces that delighted the men ruled by the Pharaohs. Certain it is, that similar dances are depicted on the walls of the most ancient Egyptian buildings; and one young girl of the group who danced before us, was in feature, form, and colour, so exactly resembling them, that she seemed to belong altogether to a past age.

A small brass cymbal, that tinkles like a little bell, is used by all these dancing girls to mark the time and movement of the dance. Each dancer has two pair of them fastened by a loop of cord over the thumb and second finger of each hand. They have already been described, in p. 238; but an engraving is always so good an elucidation of anything of the kind, that we place one here to complete our narrative.



Between the dances, the girls sat on the floor and smoked pipes, while one of the party sang in a

peculiarly high-pitched voice. They were attended, as usual, by an old woman, who plied them with strong, coarse, native spirit, which they tossed off, glass after glass, in a manner that could only be rivalled by a London cabman.

These girls are a peculiar race, not acknowledged by the Egyptians as of their lineage; "the Ghawazee are Gipsies," was the explanation I got in English from our Egyptian dragoman. Of course he used the latter term to convey an equivalent sense of the wandering hordes from which they are descended. Lane says—"It is remarkable that the gipsies in Egypt often pretend to be descended from a branch of the same family to whom the Ghawazee refer their origin; but their claim is still less to be regarded than that of the latter, because they do not unanimously agree on this point. The ordinary language of the Ghawazee is the same as that of the rest of the Egyptians; but they sometimes make use of a number of words peculiar to themselves, in order to render their speech unintelligible to strangers." In this they resemble the gipsy tribe generally. Bayle St. John remarks:—"It seems impossible to obtain a distinct idea of the origin and history of the so-called tribe of Ghawazee. Of course the nature of their occupation precludes the possibility of any unity of blood; but there are certainly traces of a

distinct type, which reappears here and there in remarkable purity. Forms and faces cannot surpass in beauty those of the complete Ghawazee; and, wonderful to say, in spite of the life of debauchery these women lead, they *keep* far better than their more virtuous sisters;" retaining beauty longer. Lane says, "Many of them are extremely handsome;" and one named Kutchek Arnem was long celebrated for a matchless pensive beauty to which an American traveller has devoted many warm pages of description. They all wander as occasion prompts, visiting fairs and festivals, where their tents always occupy the most conspicuous position. They even accompany religious bands, and, Bayle St. John says, "as might have been guessed, many of them yearly perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, and come back with the respectable title of Hadji, and a purse well filled by the contributions of saints absent from their families." This title of Hadji, or "Pilgrim," is ostentatiously paraded by persons of the lowest class, as a prefix to the proper name, when they wish to be on the politest terms, addressing each other as "Hadji Mustapha," or whatever the name may be of the person they would thus compliment.

In taking leave of a subject so peculiar as this dancing, it is neither the wish nor the intention of the author to say one word in its defence; but,

inasmuch as one of our most popular writers has declared his conviction that "the much maligned Orient is not half maligned enough," we may be permitted to ask if we are so sure of our own "glass houses" that we can thus "throw stones" at our neighbours? Will not a Parisian masked ball furnish us with dancing about which the less that is said the better? and are our own ballet girls all vestals? If we look with Western eyes on Eastern manners, we may expect some return glances not given too approvingly. I met with many instances of "shocks" good Mussulmen had received from European manners; and I remember doing my countrymen unwonted mischief during a conversation I had with a grave inhabitant of Cairo on this subject of dancing. He had heard a report of a ball given by one of the consuls at Alexandria, where ladies danced with gentlemen indiscriminately; he apologised for mentioning it, and added, "he believed the report was a lie, invented by the wicked Jews." He was greatly amazed when I assured him it was no unusual thing to do in the best European society; and I could see he was not well pleased at having a story confirmed which he refused to believe, and had often contradicted. He had evidently "thought better of us," and was mortified at our unworthiness. This is only one example among many of

Oriental criticisms, which we should find as severe upon us as our own are upon them, when induced by different national custom and feeling.

Let us leave these syrens, ancient and modern, and pursue our placid course on the broad and beautiful stream. It deserves that name from Esné upward; nor is its placidity interfered with by much traffic. The boats are few indeed that we now meet, compared with those between Cairo and Thebes. The whole land has also a more primitive and pastoral look. The ruins, when we reach them, seem more solitary, the villages more isolated. As the stream winds, the scenery is varied and pleasing; the rocks are of more fantastic form than before. Over the low lands whirlwinds of sand will frequently be seen, which might give the idea of the presence of a large factory chimney in a distant town, hidden by the verdure nearer the river bank. There is nothing, however, to demand particular attention until El Kab is reached, about twenty miles distant from Esné. It is on the eastern bank, and still exhibits many ruined monuments of its former glory. Its inscriptions and paintings have been of much value to the historian and the antiquary; but the ordinary visitor may not find much remaining to gratify him for stopping there. Many a relic of absorbing interest and value to the student, has less

attraction to ordinary eyes than a more showy sculpture if well preserved. This place has suffered greatly from the usual fate of the Nile antiquities. It has been wantonly destroyed, pulled to pieces for building stones, or its stones burnt for lime. *Sic transit gloria mundi,* on the banks of the Nile.

El Kab is the Eiliethyias, or city of Lucina, of the ancients. It is among the rocks at the back of the modern town, that we must search for the most interesting records now remaining of its past history. Some small chapels, and still more remarkable tombs, are cut in them. These tombs, like others already described at Beni-Hassan, present invaluable pictures of the ancient Egyptian manners, and though not equal to the latter in point of execution, in some instances give representations not to be met with elsewhere. This is particularly the case with the delineations of boats, which are depicted with a minute and curious truthfulness.

A short ten miles brings us to Edfou, and there is nothing to demand a stay till we reach the quay. The vast gate-towers of the Great Temple have been before our eyes long ere we arrive there, and the high walls of the building tell of its size and importance as they shoot above the miserable town at their base. Nothing can be more striking than the grandeur and vastness of this noble building. It

stands on elevated ground about two miles from the river; but it is nearly five by the road the visitor has to go, winding as it does among cultivated fields, along raised causeways, and up and down canal banks, filled with fertilising streams when the Nile rises. The town is an unusually large collection of deplorable mud huts, the lanes between them ankle-deep with light sand, and infested by troublesome dogs and disagreeable people. Indeed Edfou may bear the palm for bold beggary, which is nowhere rifer than on the banks of the Nile.

It is pleasant to turn to a more cheering theme—the protection of the monuments by the Egyptian government, and the exhumation of one of the finest. The Pasha does not now permit foreigners to do as they please in damaging buildings or carrying off fragments; and he has been steadily employed in clearing others from the rubbish which for ages has concealed them. This has deen done with eminent success at Edfou. The representations of this fine temple by Roberts, Bartlett, and other artists, are now to be referred to as curious pictures of what it used to be, when buried nearly to the roof by the sands which had drifted over it for centuries. Wilkinson says, "The whole of the interior is so much concealed by the houses of the inhabitants that a very small part of it is accessible, through a

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

TEMPLE AT EDFOU.

narrow aperture, and can only be examined with the assistance of a light; and this is more to be regretted as the people are most troublesome." Bartlett says, "The interior is almost filled up with rubbish, and, imperfectly seen, as it needs must be, hardly repays the trouble of groping through heaps of dust and filth." Now, all this has been removed, and the result is the display of one of the most perfect and beautiful temples in Egypt. It has been entirely freed, from interior to roof, of all obstructions, and the Arab huts that once covered its roof removed. The effect is magical, and the building only seems to want its priests and sacred utensils to realise its ancient glories as in Egypt's palmy days. The grand gate-towers, with gigantic figures of gods, admit the visitor to an open court, surrounded by a pillared cloister from which small side chapels are entered. Crossing the court, a vast hall, supported by varied and massive columns, covered with hieroglyphics, and richly painted in tints still fresh, forms a noble place of assembly, from whence the smaller chapels—the most sacred of all—are entered. Looking back from this hall upon the open court, the view is obtained which forms Plate XVI. By contrasting this with David Roberts's charming picture from the same point of view, the extent and value of the labour recently bestowed on this temple may be

well comprehended. The colours on the columns are still fresh and beautiful: the walls covered with elaborate sculpture in relief. The eye and mind are bewildered with the profusion and beauty of detail that here courts attention.

In the central chapel beyond this hall, the original

sanctuary, or shrine, of the god still exists: it is formed from one immense block of red granite, with a pyramidal top, and is covered with sculpture in relief. It is unique among Egyptian relics, and of singular interest. The cut depicts this holy of

holies, as seen from the entrance gate. The inclined plane leading up to it in place of steps, will be observed by the visitor, as well as the socket in which turned the pivot of the massive gate which once closed it. All these sanctuaries or chapels are very perfect, and numerous minor "points" of interest are here to be seen in perfection. In that to the right of the sanctuary is a curious zodiac, with the goddess curled round it. But two years ago Edfou was an Arab town. "Their miserable dwellings are stuck in every accessible place in and about the temple," says Roberts, "and over the sanctuary is a populous village, where the bleating of kids, the crowing of cocks, and the cries of children, are utterly out of character with their strange locality." The whole temple is now relieved of all this, and so wondrously perfect, that it is not too much to say that it is more complete in its pristine integrity than any of our cathedrals. This good work has only been effected during the last year; the clearance of the exterior is even now going on; and a most curious sight it is for the stranger, to look down into the pit of sand and dust in front of the temple, and see the crowd of diggers and labourers removing it—all gesticulating and screaming, elbowing each other, or fighting their way up with their baskets of dirt, amid camels and donkeys also employed in

carriage, and all half concealed in an atmosphere thick with choking dust or fine sand.

The exterior walls of the temple have been now trenched round to their base. They are entirely covered with figures of colossal proportions, like the temple at Dendera. An idea of the vast labour requisite to clear this building may be formed, from the enormous mounds of sand and dust heaped beside it, and seen through the central door in our plate. The view from these artificial hills is worth obtaining, giving, as it does, a *coup d'œil* of the entire temple, the village, the plain, the winding river, and the noble chain of the Arabian mountains in the distance.

Edfou is the Apollinopolis Magna of antiquity. The temple was founded by Ptolemy Philometer (180-145 B.C.), and continued by other kings of the line, the last named being Alexander (106-81 B.C.). The name of Tiberius Claudius Cæsar occurs on the western tower; so that here, as elsewhere in Egypt, we find the Roman rulers propitiating the people of Egypt by completing, repairing, or upholding the national faith.

In advance of the Great Temple are the remains of a smaller, similar to those noted before, in which the goddess Isis is seen nursing the infant Horus. It consists of two small chambers, and has been wantonly injured by the abstraction of stones,

found afterwards not to be wanted, and now scattered in confusion around.

Edfou has always had admirers. Roberts, on his return to it, after inspecting all that Egypt could show, declares—"It has not lost by the temples that I have seen, but, on the contrary, gained, in the impression it gives me of its extent and regularity, its massive proportions, and the beauty of its sculpture; and surpasses all above it, for its colossal size and the excellent preservation it is in, excepting where it has been wantonly injured."

The great drawback to the pleasure of the visitor here is the persevering annoyance of begging. The whole village turns out upon the traveller; sometimes the demand becomes so pressing, and assumes so much the character of a threat, that it is alarming to many. But fortunately the government protects the European traveller, and punishes so severely the slightest outrage committed on him, that these mendicants dare not attempt what they seem eager to effect—personal robbery; while their fear of constituted authority is so great that if the traveller shows determination, and clears a way for himself by the aid of a good stick, he may get that freedom from annoyance nothing else will ensure him; for even the gift of money will only bring forth fresh and eager applicants, the filth of whose persons, and the

vermin which swarm in their never-changed rags, making them most disgusting.

It may sound unpleasant and unjust to many who have only European experience, this reference to the *argumentum baculinum;* but the traveller will soon find himself forced into the national habit, of using or threatening to adopt it, the fact being that the natives are so inured to the custom, that they treat with contempt any order that may not be accompanied by a real or assumed power. They reverence only that which is stronger than themselves; and, so far from resenting, they respect the person who gives them unmistakable proof of his power, and have but a contempt for the ruler whose law is the law of kindness. Hence the people who suffer by it, use the native proverb, "the stick was sent from heaven," —feeling that all order depends upon its judicious use. The traveller who is not willing to enforce his rights, and retain his power of rule over his boat's crew, by a rigid discipline, will soon find that he can do nothing with his men, who will behave just as they please—stay where they like, as long as they like, under some futile pretence; pass by places where he would wish to stop; and insubordination and contempt will be the ultimate result. Let it not be understood that quarrelling and beating are essentials to Nile travelling; kindness is well appreciated, and

we never found an instance in which it failed: but it must never degenerate into weakness; the feeling must be retained of power being with the master.

It would be well if Edfou were protected by gates and a custodian, as is the temple at Esné, that the traveller might walk thoughtfully through its vast halls, undisturbed by eager beggars. The nuisance they are at present, renders the memory of the visit here more pleasant than the reality. It would be well, too, if this noble temple could be spared further injury from travellers—that sculptures be not chipped, or names cut and scrawled upon its walls. It has been wondrously preserved, and laboriously exhumed for the gratification and instruction of the nineteenth century; let our boasted age of intellect at least preserve its consistency, by protecting from wanton injury this vast and wondrous work of the old world.

CHAPTER X.

EDFOU TO ASSOUAN.

After leaving Edfou the river assumes a placidity and loneliness which characterise it as far as Assouan. On the eastern shore the inhabitants are thinly scattered, and are members of the Arab tribe of Ababdeh, which occupies the country between the Nile and the Red Sea, and whose chief occupation is that of breeding camels for the market at Esné, whence they are distributed over the whole of Egypt, being by far the most important beast of burden the country possesses. There is a remarkable fitness in the camel for the place and the people; nowhere but in a slow-going country could so slow-going a creature be endured. Its pace is confirmed and imperturbable. Its real hatred of labour is equal to that of the people themselves, and its dogged and unyielding refusal to carry more than it chooses, gives it a complete mastery over man. It is certainly as

unmanageable, uninteresting, and ugly a beast as man has to do with—never does anything willingly, screaming and groaning in impotent spite at every attempt to load it, and moving with the mere resignation of conquered obstinacy when it begins its unwilling journey.

There is nothing to call for especial remark on the

river until the picturesque ruins of the old Arab city of Booayb are seen on the eastern bank. The sketch was taken to the south of the town, as it is seen in coming down the river from Assouan. It is now entirely deserted, left to slow decay, and tenanted only by wild creatures. It is constructed on the sloping side of the hill, and has been entirely encircled by a curtain wall, connected with round

towers at intervals, and with a citadel on the summit of the rock. It is probably of mediæval date, when only such a system of fortification could be of use or value. It greatly resembles many of the smaller fortified towns of the middle ages on the Moselle, Maine, and Danube; having a remarkable similarity in aspect and construction to Durrenstein, on the last-named river, celebrated as the place of captivity of our Richard Cœur-de-Lion, after his hurried return from the crusades. It is quite possible that the system of fortification which we term Edwardian, and which has for its principal features this *enciente* of wall and tower, may have had its origin in the experiences of the warriors of the cross, during their career in the East, when bow and arrow, and catapult, were powerless to do very serious harm to these well-walled cities crowded with a half-savage soldiery.

The scenery about Booayb, and ten miles further to Silsilis, is picturesque; the river is broad and beautiful, and there is a richness and brightness in the vegetation of the banks telling of a nearer approach to a tropical clime. As we approach Silsilis, we notice the convergence towards the river of the rocky chain that bounds Egypt on both sides, and at Silsilis shuts in the stream, narrowing it considerably between its strong walls. Gebel Silsilis, which literally signifies the mountain of the chain,

received its name from an old Arab fable, narrating the actions of an ancient sovereign of Egypt, who is reported to have stretched a chain across the Nile to impede all southern voyagers, except such as he chose to allow passage; and thus levy a toll, or hinder an invasion. A singular isolated rock, upon whose summit a wedge-shaped mass reposes, is pointed out as the pillar to which this chain was secured. It is shown in Plate XVIII., and is on the western bank of the stream.

The old Egyptian town, inhabited by the quarrymen, whose labours here gave stone for the chief buildings of the country in the olden time, and which we have examined in our course up the stream, was at the base of the mountain on the eastern side of the river; but the vestiges of its existence are few and uninteresting. The quarries themselves on both sides of the stream abound in interest, and no one can visit them without being strongly impressed with the vastness and grandeur of the labours in ancient Egypt. These quarries exhibit very clearly the mode adopted by the masons for obtaining these huge blocks; they were cut from the top of the hills downward to the depth of each stone required, and then dissevered from the lower mass by horizontal cutting, aided by wedges of wood saturated with water, their expansive properties induc-

ing fracture. By this means a series of blocks was obtained, until the base of the quarry was reached, and a straight wall of rock bounded it on all sides; this again could be cut into another series of blocks, as far into the mountain as its proper stratification would allow. The stone here seems almost inexhaustible, and the vastness of the labour which has been ages ago bestowed in cutting away such great quantities, only reveals the still greater mass remaining. Immense walls of sandstone rise on all sides, and branch off into passages and great open areas, wonderful for their size and continuity.

Miss Martineau graphically describes this spot:—"The quarries of Silsilis have a curious aspect from the river—half-way between rocks and buildings; for the stones were quarried out so regularly as to leave buttresses which resemble pillars or colossal statues. Here, where men once swarmed, working that machinery whose secret is lost, and moving those masses of stone which modern men can only gaze at,—in this once busy place, there is now only the hyena and its prey. In the bright daylight, when the wild beast is hidden in its lair, all is still." So little effect have time and neglect in this favoured climate, that the tool marks of the workmen, made nearly three thousand years ago, are as fresh as the work of the present day, and seem as if the labourer

had suspended his business to resume it immediately. Warburton has placed this in its most familiar aspect when he says—"Hollowed out of the solid rock there are squares as large as that of St. James's, streets as large as Pall Mall, and lanes and alleys without number; in short, you have here all the negative features of a town, if I may so speak; *i.e.*, if a town be considered as a *cameo*, these quarries are a vast *intaglio*."

The chief interest of this locality is now confined to the western bank, where the rock-cut temples

demand an investigation they will well repay. The most northerly, and therefore the first that will be seen by the visitor in ascending the river, is cut into a low cliff in advance of the main rock, at some slight elevation. The general aspect of this spot is seen in the accompanying sketch. The chamber is

somewhat rudely and solidly fashioned, as if the *façade* was supported by four massive piers, upon which rested a heavy cornice. Open doorways between these piers lead to the interior, which takes the form of a long narrow gallery, with an arched roof. The walls between the piers are sculptured with figures of the gods; and in the thickness of the entrance on the northern door is a still smaller shrine cut, in which are seated sacred figures, now too much battered to be readily recognised: their forms and features have been wantonly mutilated by the Christian iconoclasts who have at some time converted this chamber into a chapel, and painted inscriptions of a sacred character on its walls. Judging from their injured remains, these figures of the gods do not appear to be older than the Ptolemaic and Roman eras. This entry and the northern end of the temple are depicted in our Plate XVII. Opposite the spectator is a range of standing figures of gods, and upon the side walls are many tablets and inscriptions of an historic character. In one instance we see the king defeating his enemies; in another, he is depicted as a conqueror, carried in procession to return thanks to the gods, accompanied by his soldiers and their captives. These sculptures are very ancient, the king being the Horus who reigned from 1337 to 1325 B.C.; they are generally delicately

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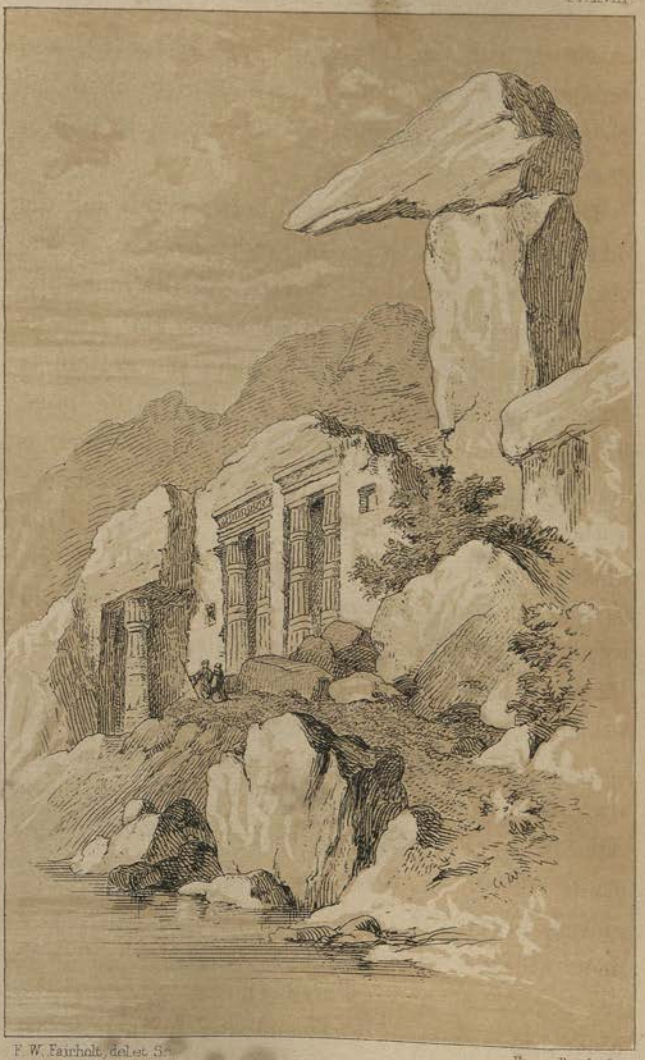
Vincent Brooks, Imp.

INTERIOR OF ROCK-TEMPLE, SILSILIS.



F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

TEMPLES AT SILSILIS.

executed, with all that abundance of detail, and scrupulosity of manipulation, which gives them, as pictures of ancient times, a value equal to photographs.

The rock is deeply excavated between this and the other temples, and walls of sandstone hem in the visitor. The loneliness is perfect. Eagles make the crannies their home, and sweep across the river as the footfalls of a stranger approach; the ground is rugged, and tangled with wild plants,—the most formidable being a species of thorn, whose spines are so large and strong, that they pierced the upper leather of my shoe, and penetrated the foot. This rugged road descends from the quarry to the river, close beside the isolated mass to which the old legend has affixed the guardian-chain of the stream. Plate XVIII. is a sketch of this rock, and the smaller temples beyond; which are more beautiful in design, and of more striking aspect when seen from the river, than that already described. They are decorated with columns resembling bundles of water-plants, like those of the tomb at Beni-Hassan, engraved in Plate VII., and are surmounted by a cornice upon which a row of asps is represented. Within are sculptured and painted representations of the kings and queens of Egypt offering to their gods; among them may be seen the god of the Nile, dis-

tinguished by his emblems, the water-plants; as well as the peculiar deity of the district, the god Savak, who has the head of a crocodile, and to whom that creature was sacred.

There are many smaller chapels or shrines, some of them converted into tombs, and an abundance of inscriptions cut on the face of the rock, as well as upon the large boulders that line the sides of the stream. Altogether Silsilis presents more curious peculiarities than any other place on the Nile. In some of the caves Greek inscriptions, accompanied by the cross, testify the re-consecration of the temples to the faith we ourselves hold. The remains of Silsilis have been less injured than others on the river, as there is no village, and the whole district is utterly lonely and deserted: as a general idea of the quarries may be obtained from the boat, and the principal shrines plainly seen, as they are close to the water, very few travellers stop here. It will, however, well repay a few hours' delay; and the visitor will not fail to remark the freshness and beauty of the coloured decoration of many of these little chapels. Some of the ceilings are of elaborate design, the compartments of colour separated by flowing bands, the prototype of the Greek scroll, which, like other architectural details, had their origin in Egypt long before the age of Pericles.

Nothing can prove the dryness of the Egyptian climate better than the state of these little temples; the wall-paintings, though merely a water-colour, and hanging over the river, are still bright and perfect, after more than two thousand years of exposure to the air; time has written no "defeatures" on their surface—it is man alone who has injured them. Fortunately there is some inconvenience in getting up to them, and visitors have been very sparing of their names, which have generally been modestly placed in small pencil characters where they do little or no mischief.

To the geologist this portion of the river presents many features of interest; the entire line of river margin gives capital sections of the strata composing

the rocks: at some distance above the temples, where the cliffs open out, and the river widens, the irregularity of the stratification is very curiously visible, as will be seen from the foregoing engraving. Great changes have occurred in this part of the river, which at one time was confined by rocks, and pent up in a narrow and dangerous channel. The barrier in the course of ages has been broken down, and the river freed in its northward way, transferring the first great cataract or rapid to the rocks beyond Assouan; though there and elsewhere in its course its career is neither so rapid nor so dangerous as it appears to have been in the time of the Roman writers, whose descriptions are too formidable to characterise in any truthful degree the present aspect of the scenes they profess to detail.

Beyond this point the rocks recede, and the country opens out on both sides, with an arid desert on the western bank, and stony *débris* on the eastern side. At some distance onward sand hills approach more closely to the water; and it is curious to note the gradual encroachments of vegetable life, in patches of coarse reedy grass, dotting the sides of these sand hills, and sometimes giving a refreshing aggregate of green to the glaring yellow, which is the predominating tint upon which the eye wanders. A few thorny bushes generally succeed to this grass;

then a slight deposit of mould is formed; ultimately the husbandman takes his advantage of the humble beginning, preparing to avail himself of the annual deposit of Nile mud, by trenching the ground; and here and there we see a small garden rising amid the desert around.

From the end of the mountain range of Silsilis to the temple of Kom-Ombos is about thirteen miles; there is nothing to call for especial remark until we reach the latter place, unless it be the abundance of crocodiles that infest the stream here, and may be seen basking in great family groups, of all ages and sizes, on the sunny islands of sand in the centre of the river.

The temple of Kom-Ombos is very grandly situated on the summit of a hill, commanding a magnificent view of the river as it winds far below toward Silsilis. The stream is very rapid here, and strikes with great violence on this eastern bank, undermining the soil, and making it dangerous for boats to attempt a stoppage, except above the temple. One of the great towers of the gateway has already been undermined and thrown down by this constant action of the stream on its sandy foundation; and the other must soon follow. On the land side the sand from the Arabian desert is fast burying the building, so that at no very distant period the same fate will overtake

this grand temple on the hill, that has befallen the smaller one on the banks below—now sunk in the stream, but only a few years since existing in all the beauty of coloured sculpture, and well-preserved freshness.

The great temple is much ruined, and its basement buried in sand, but the painting on much of it is still very vivid, though exposed to the air. It is this that makes one of the wonders of Egyptian remains; they appear so fresh and new, although so ancient, that a northern man, used to the decay which a few years ensures to any exposed work of art, cannot realise the fact of long ages passing over them in this favoured climate, and leaving scarcely a trace of their progress.

The dryness of the Egyptian climate is again proved here, for the crude brick walls and buildings about this temple, though of the time of Auletes (B.C. 65), are still perfect; yet these bricks may be easily crumbled in the finger; they are but imperfectly sun-dried, and have much chopped straw in them. They are laid in alternate courses horizontal and parallel. Under the portico are some figures of the gods, which have not been properly finished; they are sculptured in low-relief, over outline sketches made upon graduated squares, in a perfectly conventional manner. The director of the works

has altered his idea of their position, and the sketches have been afterwards made the contrary way, so that they cross each other, and have a very confusing effect, as the original erroneous sketch has been allowed to remain. They are interesting as showing the mode in which these artists worked, and how completely they were fettered by rule and measure, never being permitted latitude of invention in sacred representation.

Savak, the crocodile-headed deity, shared with Areoris, the hawk-headed deity, the worship of the devotees who came to this temple in the olden days of idolatry. It had, therefore, a double sanctuary, and is duplex in all its arrangements. The ruin which now remains is but a small portion of the original building, embracing the larger part of the portico, which is remarkable for the beauty and variety of its columns. The capitals are designed from the conventional types of the vegetable kingdom, which the architects of ancient Egypt so well knew how to adapt with the best effect; and we have here the lotus, the papyrus, and the palm in succession, producing a very varied and beautiful series of columns.

Kom-Ombos was the scene of the savage religious feud between the worshippers and the haters of the crocodile, which Juvenal relates in his "Satires," as

if from his own experience, when an unwilling resident in the land to which he had been banished, or where he thought it prudent to retire after his severe denunciations of the corruptions at Rome. For the credit of human nature it might be wished they were less true in their charges than they appear on all good evidence to be; and in the same spirit we might hope his picture of intolerant enmity in Egypt was overcharged, if we had not more modern and equally lamentable experience of its ferocity. Juvenal never conceals his dislike of the Egyptians, and he thus narrates this incident at Kom-Ombos (as translated by Gifford) :—

"Now the Ombite festival drew near;
When the prime Tent'rites, envious of their cheer,
Resolv'd to seize the occasion, to annoy
Their feast, and spoil the sacred week of joy.
It came: the hour the thoughtless Ombites greet,
And crowd the porches, crowd the public street.
With tables richly spread; where, night and day,
Plung'd in the abyss of gluttony they lay:
(For savage as the country is, it vies,
In luxury, if I may trust my eyes,
With dissolute Canopus). Six were past,
Six days of riot, and the seventh and last
Rose on the feast. And now the Tent'rites thought
A cheap, a bloodless victory, might be bought,
O'er such a helpless crew; nor thought they wrong:
For, could the event be doubtful? where a throng
Of drunken revellers, stammering, reeling-ripe,
And capering to a sooty minstrel's pipe,

Coarse unguents, chaplets, flowers, on this side fight,
On that keen hatred and deliberate spite!
At first both sides, though eager to engage,
With taunts and jeers, the heralds of their rage,
Blow up their mutual fury; and anon,
Kindled to madness, with loud shouts rush on;
Deal, though unarm'd, their vengeance blindly round,
And, with clench'd fists, print many a ghastly wound.
Then might you see, amid the desperate fray,
Features disfigured, noses torn away,
Hands, where the gore of mangled eyes yet reeks,
And jaw bones starting through the cloven cheeks!"

Juvenal continues with a disgusting picture of the increased rage of the combatants, who sacrifice one of the flying Ombites, tear him limb from limb, and absolutely gnaw the flesh, thus revenging

"a deadly hate,
Sprung from a sacred grudge of ancient date."

Gifford, in the notes to his translation, points out a most singular notion, expressed by Bruce, the traveller, as to the use of the fabulous chain of Silsilis, already alluded to:—"As the chain is in the Harmonthic nome, as well as the capital of the Ombi, I suppose it to be the barrier of this last state, to hinder those of Dendera from coming up *to eat them!*"

The thirty miles from Kom-Ombos to Assouan are picturesque and agreeable. Thick groves of trees line the banks, above which wave forests of luxuriant

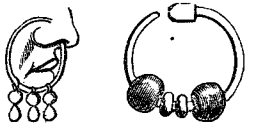
palms, brought out in strong relief from the sand hills behind, golden-hued in the bright sunshine. Patches of lentils and other herbs slope towards the river, like a carpet of emerald green. On the eastern bank, dark masses of granite afford a more sombre background to the scene; it occasionally mixes with the sandstone on the western side also. The whole aspect of the country is more tropical than it has hitherto been on our journey. After passing Esné, the influence of Nubian manners is more or less visible. At Edfou the female children and young women adopt the Nubian attire, if attire it may be called, which consists simply of ornamental appendages, and an apron formed of leathern thongs, and decorated with a few shells and beads of red earth, and rough silver. This single article of dress is all that is worn before marriage by young girls; after which they adopt the loose dark brown or blue gown, wearing nothing beneath it.

Women here frequently adopt a gown that is almost identical in arrangement with the Greek *chiton*. It

consists of a capacious piece of strong woollen stuff, reaching from feet to shoulders, where it is turned over and falls to the waist; the sides are stretched together, and the top edge fastened on each shoulder. It is without sleeves, is not girdled at the waist, and may be said to be without form, inasmuch as it is a simple piece of linen hanging loosely from the shoulders; but it has a grandeur of its own as the thick folds fall heavily about the wearer, and are brought out in great distinctness by the brilliant light and shade of the climate. A long veil of the same stuff is cast over the head, and hangs behind the wearer. The face is very seldom hidden here, and the hair is often cut and arranged in a series of small spirals, exactly as seen in the ancient paintings of the tombs. The fashions are the same, with very little modifications, as were in vogue with the same class in the reign of the Ptolemies. Tattooing is very common; the face being marked by a small ornament in the centre of the forehead, just above the nose, and also on the chin, of which we have engraved a specimen on p. 212. The eyes are surrounded by the black stain of henna, which certainly has its value in giving them additional lustre by its contrast; the lips are almost as constantly dyed blue, which has a decidedly unpleasant look. The fondness of these women and children for hair-oil,

obtained from the castor-oil plant, is a still more repulsive fashion; they soak their heads with it until the hair drips, and it lies in pools about their foreheads; its rancid smell is unbearable to a stranger, and would always induce him to keep some distance from a Nubian Venus.

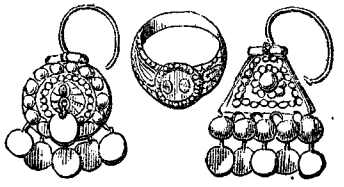
In their noses is invariably placed a ring, generally of copper, sometimes of gold; to which are appended small metal ornaments or red earthen beads.



Two specimens of these rings are here given; it will be noted that they are never hung, as most Europeans imagine, from the centre cartilage of the nose, but always through the right nostril. Miss Martineau, who should be, as a lady, a more competent authority than myself on the subject of becoming female costume, and its accessories, is inclined to look more favourably on this fashion (remembering the taste of the European ladies for heavy earrings) than most others have done; and argues, not without reason, that if the flesh of the fair sex be ever rudely punctured to hang therefrom any extraneous ornament, there is really little difference between the ear and the nose, except as custom reconciles the practice.

The earrings worn by the ordinary classes are

large and peculiar; they are very cheap—about the rate of fourpence per pair. They are made of plates of gilt copper, struck up in a die, with a few ornamental protubrances, and having a row of smaller pendants attached to the lower part. This love for



pendants is universal, and indulged whenever there is a chance of doing it. Our engraving depicts the two varieties most commonly worn. Of these the pyramidal is the chief favourite, and is almost universally adopted, being seen from Cairo to Assouan. Rude as these things are, the boldness of their design gives them an exceedingly good effect, the dark skins of the wearers acting as an excellent foil, and the general poverty of their attire lending a sort of idea of value even to articles of such rough workmanship as these. Between the earrings is placed a finger ring of the value of one half-penny; it is cast in pewter, the central jewel being a bit of glass, coloured beneath with a tint of yellow, upon

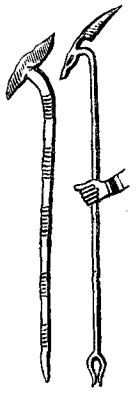
which some red spots are daubed. The necklaces are generally earthen beads, sometimes glass, of various tints; the bracelets and anklets simple bands of copper; the girls having attached to their anklets a row of small bells, which ring as they run; small pebbles and fragments of stone are placed in them to give the due sound.

Boys are seldom clothed at all; when they are, their wardrobe consists of a shirt with wide sleeves, worn until it falls in tatters from their shoulders. As it is often seen in ragged inutility, hanging in strips upon them, the good of wearing it at all is not very apparent. Their hair is generally cut close, except one tuft on the summit of the head—a custom retained by grown men. The mothers usually make three slight incisions on the skin of the face, close to the outer edge of each eye; it is believed to strengthen them and prevent ophthalmia. The men tattoo their hands and wrists very constantly, and the cut

here given is a specimen of the prevailing styles adopted. The feet of the girls are sometimes similarly tattooed. Finger-nails tinged with the

rosy tints of henna are common; the palms of the hands are also occasionally covered with the same hue. Sometimes the first joint of the finger is dyed black, with a composition similar to the *kohl* used for the eyes. The effect of this dyeing, tattooing, and bluing the lips is by no means pleasing to Europeans, but it seems to possess an irresistible charm to the Egyptians of the lower classes, who indulge in this cheap decoration to a large extent.

The men here may often be seen carrying a stick, still more common in Nubia, which is so identical with the staff universally seen in the hands of the ancient gods of the land, in all the sculptures and paintings, that the resemblance cannot be merely accidental. It is cut from the bush so that a small portion of the root is allowed to remain with it, resembling the feathered head of the jackal upon the sacred staves, which are believed to be indicative of the eternal stability of the gods. For convenience of reference, one of these staves is here engraved beside the Nubian stick. The latter, it will be observed, is strengthened by a binding of brass wire, at intervals about an inch asunder.



The curve of the river which allows the first view of Assouan is particularly picturesque. To the right the rock is crowned by a Sheikh's tomb, below which is a ruined fortress on a smaller hill; other ruins are near, and give diversity to the scene, the vegetation being perfectly tropical. Rounding this rock Assouan appears on the rising ground to the left; in advance is a picturesque ruin stretching into the water, with a series of arches, sometimes called Roman, but more probably the remains of mediæval baths. Above the town, granite rocks tower up crowned with ruins, the view being bounded by the Isle of Elephantine to the right, with its green palm groves, and ruined walls, once the substructure of temples on the quay. The most fantastic forms are taken by the rocks and boulders of dark granite, which start out of the river on all sides, and appear to form a gate of rock in front of the harbour. The ancient writers have noted the singular effect produced by these fantastic and confused masses of stone, which give a peculiar character to the scenery of "far Syene," the boundary of ancient Egypt, and the city of Juvenal's banishment.

Plate XIX. represents that part of the town opposite which boats are usually moored. The rocks crossing the stream have hieroglyphic inscriptions

F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc.

Vincent, Brooks, Imp.

ASSOUAN.

cut upon them, and others are seen in those above the water and in the midst of the gardens of the town. The arches alluded to above are just beyond these. The houses of the town are much hidden by trees. When our boat was placed here, there was stationed immediately in front of us the native *dahabeah*, depicted in the sketch, and on board of it a negro who was conveying a young Nubian lion from Dongola to Cairo; it was about the size of a Newfoundland dog, and very much attached to its keeper, rubbing about his head and body like a cat, and allowing him to carry it in his arms, and make it play all kinds of antics as he held it by a rope. During the day it was fastened to the sloping bank, in the sun, and gave a very tropical aspect to the scene. The large group of trading boats near this told also of inner Africa and the far south; for the sailors were busy with the merchantmen in unloading the camels, who had brought spices, gums, senna, and elephant's teeth, from Dongola, Sennaar, and the interior of the country. The smell of the herbs pervaded the air, and it was a picturesque sight to witness the groups so busily engaged; and still more so at night, when the camel-drivers constructed for themselves a circular shelter of the bales they had brought, round which they ranged their guns and extra clothing, lighting a cane fire in the midst to

cook their suppers of grain, after which they rolled themselves in their clothes and laid down for the night by the fire, the camels being picketed outside.

Juvenal, in his eleventh Satire, notes the trade of this place in ivory, and the use made of it in the manufacture of sumptuous furniture for the Roman palaces :—

> "Wrought from those valued tusks Syene lends,
> Which the swart Moor, or swarthier Indian, sends,
> From Nabath's forest, where the unwieldly beast,
> Drops his huge burden, of its weight released."

As soon as a fresh boat arrives, the natives come down to it, offering all kinds of articles for sale —ostrich eggs, bunches of their feathers, spears, shields, and daggers used by Bedouins, Nubians, and other tribes, bows and arrows, bracelets of bone and silver, the leather aprons worn by the women, baskets of coloured reed, and "odds and ends" of all kinds. The bazaar of the town is a wretchedly-supplied lane of dusty shops, with only the commonest and cheapest articles on sale; the great preponderance of cowrie-shell ornament shows that the negro taste is consulted; and some very hideous specimens of these tribes may be seen acting as common sailors in the boats.

Opposite is the Isle of Elephantine, once, and that not long since, abounding with relics of the temples

which graced it in the olden days; now all is a mass of ruin, not worth the trouble of a visit. Wilkinson says, "The whole was destroyed in 1822, by Mohamed Bey, the Pasha's *kehia*, to build a pitiful palace at Assouan;" but he notes the existence, at the time he wrote, of relics that have since disappeared.

A wall of solid masonry bounds the island opposite the beach of Assouan; a flight of stairs leading from the water upward to the temple, once formed a Nilometer the most ancient extant. On the walls of this passage are lines cut, accompanied by a series of Roman inscriptions, recording various remarkable inundations in ancient times. When the Nile rises, the whole of this beach and the rocks in the stream are submerged. The vast heaps of broken pottery are among the most remarkable relics on the island at present. Many of these fragments are coated with a vitreous glaze, similar to that so frequently seen upon the porcelain idols, found in such abundance in mummy pits and funeral chambers. It is of a very deep blue, sometimes with a green tinge, and may easily be cracked off the clay in thick semi-transparent flakes. Others are painted with an early Greek ornament, in lines of red and yellow colour. The taste for this primitive decoration remains in Egypt. The cut on next page exhibits one of the ordinary dishes used by the poorer classes;

it is formed of coarse clay, in character and quality like our red roof tiles, the ornament painted in black lines. Above it I have placed a few specimens of the older fragments just alluded to. It is a curious fact, and one deserving of record, that in all these vast heaps of ancient fragments to be met with in the ruined cities of the Nile, I never saw one piece of the red Roman lustrous ware, that is sometimes

termed "Samian pottery," and which abounds in all European cities of Roman foundation, as if the entire of their northern and western possessions had been supplied from the same manufactories. This may tend to strengthen the opinion expressed by one of our best Roman antiquaries, Mr. Roach Smith, that it is most probably the production of Gaulish and Rhenish potters, who monopolised the trade, which must have been lucrative and extensive.

Among the potsherds here, many are found with writing upon them, in enchorial and Greek characters, of which I obtained some specimens, and many others are to be seen in the British Museum. The inscriptions are usually notes of barter, as if a piece of tile had been picked up, as we take a piece of waste paper for scribbling upon, and cast away when done with. This custom illustrates the passage in Ezekiel iv. 1 :—"Take thee a tile, and pourtray upon it the city, even Jerusalem."

The people who inhabit this island are all Nubians, and more clamorous than usual for *backsheesh*, which, as they have nothing to show for it, is little deserved. They keep as guards to their wretched mud hovels a tribe of abominable dogs, more savage than any I had met with before, their masters hardly being able to control them. I was followed by a little group of children, all quite naked, but some few adorned with beads, and nose and ear rings; the young women "full-dressed" in the apron of thongs already described. They all watched our movements with much interest—pretty much as they might those of any strange beasts; they were, however, without one exception, most struck with our watch chains and pendent ornaments, which formed the most absorbing and interesting part of the exhibition our presence made for their diversion.

Belzoni has preserved a curious Arab traditionary tale about this island:—"There is in this spot, say the Arabs, great treasure, left by an ancient king of the country, previous to his departure for the upper part of the Nile, on a war against the Ethiopians. He was so avaricious that he did not leave his family anything to live upon; and he was in close friendship with a magician, whom he appointed to guard his treasure till his return. But no sooner was he gone than his relations attempted to take possession of the treasure; the magician resisted, was killed in the defence of his charge, and changed to an enormous serpent, which devoured all his assailants. The king is not yet returned, but the serpent keeps watch over the treasure; and once every night, at a particular position of the stars, he comes out of the cave with a powerful light on his head, which blinds all who attempt to look at it. He is of enormous size; descends to the Nile, where he drinks; and then returns to his cave, to watch the treasure till the king returns."

Assouan literally signifies "the opening," a name derived from its station at the river-gate of Egypt. Here anciently the Nile burst through the rocks in a tempestuous career, as described by Roman authors, but now it flows peacefully within the narrow channel. Like the more famed Scylla and Charybdis, it has

lost its formidable character; the water has, doubtless, washed down many ancient obstructions, and freed the course of the stream. Cicero speaks of the river as throwing itself headlong from the loftiest mountains, so that the people living near were deprived of the sense of hearing by its noise. Seneca corroborates the statement; and the water-marks on the Nubian rocks prove that the river anciently was at a different level. The Nile is, even now, constantly changing its aspect and course, as we have already noted at Girgeh and elsewhere.

From the hill above Assouan, where the ruins of Coptic convent are visible (and which gives the scene a very Rhenish aspect), the curve of the river as far as the first cataract may be seen. The water is crowded with boulders of rock, from Assouan to Philæ; and the cataract is in reality a rapid, produced by the confinement of the stream in a very narrow channel, which in its tortuous course might dash the boats that navigate it against these granite rocks, if they were not piloted by the natives, who know all of them, and how they may be best avoided. Arrangements are generally made at Assouan for securing this assistance. The terms vary much, according to the size and character of the boat, or the presumed wealth of the traveller. It is always exorbitant, and seldom fixed on a first interview; the

reis of the cataract states the terms on which he will secure the proper services of a number of men; and that price, as well as the number of assistants, is altogether in excess of what is fair or necessary. But this is the Egyptian mode of doing business throughout the country in everything. Two-thirds or one-half of the original estimate may be ultimately agreed upon; but the large number of men is not diminished, inasmuch as they live by this labour, have no other, and share what they can, under the control of their chief. They are altogether a very independent race, and show a certain amount of contempt even for the native government, when it attempts a coercion submitted to elsewhere. As their knowledge is essential and peculiar, the government is less stringent in its attempts at taxation with them, and a sort of amicable arrangement exists between both parties. The prices charged for getting a boat through the cataract varies from £20 to £40 English, according to its size; it is paid to the *reis* or captain of the cataract, who has the entire distribution of it to his men. When the river is high, the native boats go through by their own steersman. In general, the difficulty of the passage is much exaggerated, in order that the natives may obtain money and employ.

The rocks around Assouan are inscribed with the

names of many Egyptian kings, during whose reigns the quarries were worked which supplied the blocks for the statues and temples of the land. Upon the boulder opposite Assouan, which helps to support the boundary wall of Elephantine, is the name of Psammitichus II. (B.C. 594), in very large and deeply-cut hieroglyphics. In the quarry, at the opposite side, beneath the ruined convent already alluded to, is the name of Amunoph III. (B.C. 1403), with sculptured representations of that king sacrificing to the gods; and below is a small recess containing a headless figure of a deity. Hieroglyphic inscriptions and figures of men and gods abound on all sides—the work of the ancients who came here for stone, and thus recorded the reign of the king for whom they laboured; or propitiated the gods by the formation of these small chapels dedicated to their worship. In one of the quarries is a sarcophagus, which has been cut but never removed; and in another an obelisk, ninety-five feet in height, which has never been entirely detached from the rock which forms it. Remains of the trenches cut by the workmen, in dissevering the masses of stone, and the holes for the wooden wedges to assist in the same work, are visible everywhere. As at Silsilis, there are abundant memorials of the busy scene these stone quarries must have once presented. Now all is

silent and deserted; yet so little trace, here again, has time left of his long course, the visitor almost feels as if the work had been abandoned but for a short while, and that the men of the past might return to resume their labour in a locality so unchanged by the passage of more than two thousand years.

In the golden twilight, when the last rosy tints of the set sun glow upon the fleecy clouds, and the landscape is partially hidden; when the black fantastic rocks, crowned by antique ruins stand out in shattered loneliness against the sky, and no sound is heard but the rush of waters, an indistinct solemnity pervading the entire scene; then the awful words of Ezekiel are felt in all their power and truthfulness, as the prophecy he once uttered is to be seen fulfilled:—"Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I am against thee, Pharaoh King of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.—I am against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia."

CHAPTER XI.

ASSOUAN TO PHILÆ AND ABOU-SIMBOUL.

Travellers who make Philæ their ultimate destination—and very few go beyond it—leave their boat at Assouan, and cross the desert to the sacred island. By this means they avoid the trouble and expense of passing the cataract or rapid; the long journey by the course of the river is saved, and a more direct route taken. The distance by this road is seven miles, and is done in two hours. Close upon the outskirts of Assouan, we come upon a vast necropolis, through which the road passes. On both sides the ground is thickly covered with ruined tombs, or stone pillars, many bearing early Cufic inscriptions to the memory of the dead. The graves themselves are mere mounds, marked round by rude stones; the whole place having a ruined look of desolation—a most woful, arid resting-place, without enclosure, tree, shrub, or even blade of grass, and encroached

on by illimitable sands. A wide tract, covered with the imprint of the feet of biped and quadruped, marks the way between the rocky hills towards Philæ. No rain compacts the dusty mass; and the footprints so vividly impressed on the soft sand, have been merely crushed out by successive footfalls in the long lapse of time. It is impossible, by any amount of reading, to form an entire idea of what desert travelling is; the most minute description will fail to impress it completely on the mind, inasmuch as there is a peculiar *feeling* about it that is not to be fully understood except by personal experience—a sense of dangerous heat that strikes upward from the sand, as well as downward from the sun. Nothing can exceed the wildness of the scene, and the fantastic appearance of the rocks that bound the view, which can nowhere be rivalled, and excited the attention of travellers in the classic ages, who have recorded their impressions of the wild and fantastic scene. The high ridges of rock hide, on the right, all view of the Nile; vast boulders, piled in most extraordinary confusion, shut out the desert on the left, but occasional glimpses are obtained of the sandy plain stretching far off to the Red Sea. Many of these boulders are covered with figures and hieroglyphics, sometimes slightly incised, but with the chisel-marks as fresh as if they had been executed

but yesterday. About two miles beyond Assouan we first see fragments of an ancient wall of sun-dried brick, standing on a raised bank of earth, which was constructed to protect this famous roadway, and prevent incursions from the tribes who inhabited the desert. In many parts it is still singularly perfect. It is not peculiar to this part of Egypt, but may be traced at intervals on the boundary of the cultivated land on the eastern bank of the stream, from the rocky passes of the Gebel-el-Tayr, near the convent of Sittina. History is silent as to its construction; but tradition is rife, and points to it as the work of a queen of ancient Egypt, who thus enclosed her land from the sea to Assouan, on both sides of the river. The natives also term it the old man's wall or dyke, and affirm that it was made by enchantment, at the request of a king, to keep serpents from a favourite daughter. In some parts of its course, where the mountains are steep, it merely closes the ravines. It is not without parallel elsewhere. The great wall of China immediately comes to mind; but Europe can show works of the Roman era constructed after a similar plan, and with a similar intention—that of keeping in check the incursions of barbaric tribes. In southern Germany, "the Devil's wall," as it is popularly termed, is carried across the country a distance of a hundred and sixty miles from

Wimpfen, on the Neckar, to Neuburg, on the Danube, and was begun by the Emperor Hadrian. Our own country is not without a remarkable work of the same kind, also constructed under the auspices of that emperor; it was intended to protect south Britain from the northern tribes, and stretches across the land from the mouth of the Tyne to Solway Frith. These vast military works may, probably, all be referred to one period, that of Roman rule.

Midway to Philæ the road branches; a rocky glen to the right leads direct to Mahatta, the village near the cataract, where live the men who navigate the travellers' barges. A visit here will well repay the short *detour*, for it is a picturesque as well as a wild scene. The village and its inhabitants have a more prosperous and comfortable look, than we have hitherto seen. Their mud hovels are made more pleasant by an external divan, shaded by a few trees, under which old and young folks may sit embowered. There is a healthier moral bearing too among the people: a manlier tone, an absence of that squalid subservience we sometimes find too common in Egypt. The Nubian peasants are generally of a more independent bearing than the *fellaheen*. Their active habits, freedom from restraint in dress in early life, necessity for continuous healthy labour in

later years, and a stronger sense of personal comfort and cleanliness ensure this. The abominable parasitical insects which infest Egypt, are not here in any numbers, indeed it is broadly asserted that fleas and bugs will not live in Nubia; but as it is the custom of the people to use castor oil to lubricate the skin and soak the hair, the rank fume may be the reason why such insects avoid the people, who are sometimes most offensive from this habit.

The rush of the Nile through its rocky channel can be seen to no better advantage than here. The river is literally crowded with rocks and boulders of all sizes and shapes, as if tossed wildly about in some vast natural eruption. The cliffs have broken forms of fantastic character, and the hills often assume the aspect of heaps of granite and basalt smashed into gigantic masses, and piled in strange confusion around. The sombre colour that pervades the stone adds to the striking effect of a scene possibly unique in the world, and the strange mystic figures of the gods of the old faith, accompanied by the cabalistic-looking hieroglyphic inscriptions cut upon so many of them, give a witch-like look to this wild, unearthly district.

The passage of a boat through the rapids here is a sight worth seeing. The real dangers are added to by the noise and excitement of all engaged in the

labour of getting it safely through. Orientals, in general, are stolidly impassive, or wildly enthusiastic. Their repose is torpidity, their activity spasmodic. They swarm in and about the boat, pushing it from the rocks, guiding it as they wade in the stream, aiding steersman and captain in every inch of its way, leaping in and out of the water in mad activity, clambering crags, gesticulating, screaming, exerting limbs and lungs to the utmost pitch, until the boat passes into quiet water. The larger quantity of all this excitement and exertion is thrown away, being utterly inutile, but perfectly necessary to Nubian nature. In fact the judicious use of a few ropes and pulleys affixed to some of the rocks, and a few cool hands to use them, would make the Nile as easily navigable here as a canal-lock at home. "The channels are so narrow," says an American traveller, "that it needs only a strong rope and a strong pull to ensure the ascent." Belzoni says, "small boats and *canzias* can be drawn up or down at all times of the year;" and I was assured by a Maltese dragoman that he had come through the cataract in a returned *dahabeah*, unaided by any but the native crew of the boat, who having no strangers with them, willingly undertook the task. Belzoni attempted it on his return from Philæ: he says, "As we advanced, we expected every moment to arrive at

the spot where the great fall is; but having passed over several rapids, one in particular a little stronger, but not more extraordinary than are seen in other rivers, we were agreeably surprised to find that in less than an hour we were out of all danger. I have seen the great cataract on the west side when the water is low, and its fall was then, in length, about six hundred yards, forming an angle of thirty or thirty-five degrees, divided by the interspersed rocks into various branches." It varies, of course, with the seasons and the quantity of water in the river; and he elsewhere notes that "one of the principal falls at this season (the month of May) is about thirty feet in length, forming an angle of fifteen degrees." The "vested interests" of the men of Mahatta, of course, induce them to make the most of the real or simulated dangers; and the wild excitement they indulge in, combined with some real risk, mystifies most travellers, and strengthens their extortion. Yet their assistance is essential, and must be secured, but not on their terms: a due amount of bargaining is necessary as well for the present as the future traveller, for every year the Nile journey becomes more expensive as the greed of the natives is acceded to.

Returning to the road to Philæ, that silent pathway in the sand winds around and over huge masses

of granite, and then again assumes a level course. To the right we soon come again upon the boundary wall, here singularly perfect, upon its raised mound, thrown up from the dyke outside it. Some distance further a ruined tomb is seen upon the left; it commemorates the desert-home and last resting-place of some sheikh, who, emulating the early Christian ascetics, consigned himself to these awful solitudes till death released him. It is a desecrated ruin now—its arcaded walls open and bare, its domed roof crumbling in the dry heat. It gives greater desolation even to the desert. Rocks close in upon us here—a narrow defile of black boulders, or sharp, flinty-looking peaks, sand drifted and packed about the lowest heaps; but sand, and stone, and heat, are all that meet the eye or give the mind a thought, until a sudden turn opens out the scene, and a withered bush shows how far vegetable life once tried an encroachment on the desert. A mile in advance, a line of green, bright and deep in tint, is seen; beyond, high cliffs of dark basalt bound the view: the greenness is on the border of the stream, the rocks on the opposite bank. Philæ lies in the waters below, but not to be detected before the margin of the stream is approached, for the plain we ride over lies high; and as we dismount and descend the hill-side to the ferry-boat, Philæ rises from the

waters as beautifully as Venus is fabled to have arisen from the sea.

All travellers, ancient and modern, agree in praising the Holy Island. Curzon says, "Every part of Egypt is interesting and curious, but the only place to which the epithet of beautiful can be correctly applied is the Island of Philæ." Belzoni has devoted his most rapturous pages to its description. Warburton calls it "the most unearthly, strange, wild, beautiful spot, I ever beheld. No dreamer of the mystical old times, when beauty, knowledge, and power were realised on earth, ever pictured to himself a scene of wilder grandeur, or more perfect loveliness. All round us tower up vast masses of gloomy rocks, piled one upon the other in wildest confusion—some of them, as it were, skeletons of pyramids; others requiring only a few strokes of giant labour to form colossal statues that might have startled the Anakim. Here spreads a deep drift of silvery sand, fringed by rich verdure and purple blossoms; there, a grove of palms, intermingled with the flowering acacia; and there, through vistas of craggy cliffs and plumy foliage, gleams a calm, blue lake, with the Sacred Island in the midst, green to the water's edge, except where the walls of the old temple city are reflected."

The Island of Philæ possesses, through its sacred

character, a greater amount of interest than any other place in the world, inasmuch as it is the locality most anciently consecrated to the service of religion. At a period when history only commenced its records, Philæ was of ancient and holy renown; and no more sacred oath could be uttered by the men of Egypt than was conveyed in the words "by him who sleeps in Philæ." There is still a solemn grandeur in these words of the old faith; and when we remember that the sleeper was Osiris, that he represented the Creator, that his personal love for the country was believed to be yearly evinced in the rising of the Nile—an annual miracle according to their faith, and one upon which the very existence of the country depended;—when we think of all this, we may have a better idea of the character of the asseveration, and a due amount of reverence for the rocky islet where the worship of man toward his Maker has been continuous for thousands of years, the retrospection fading away in the darkness of pre-historic ages.

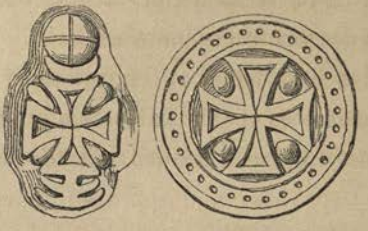
But, ancient and holy as the island is, it does not exhibit relics of antique buildings equal in age to those we meet elsewhere, and have already described. Nothing on the island is older than the Ptolemies, except the small chapel of Athor, constructed by Nectanebo I. (B.C. 381-363), and many of the erections and com-

pletions are marked as the work of the Roman emperors. The Persian invaders, under Ochus, had desecrated and destroyed here the Egyptian holy of holies. This could be more effectually done than was possible elsewhere; the strength of the determined violation is visible at Thebes. The repair of this mischief employed the rulers, native and foreign, who came after them, and appears to have been continuous while any power remained to the Roman monarchs.

The island is covered with ruined temples; and they in turn were packed with wretched hovels, inhabited by a mass of clamorous peasants. They have been dislodged, and the foundations and ruined walls of their homes only left. The place is, therefore, one of the few where the visitor is allowed comparative solitude for thought and examination.

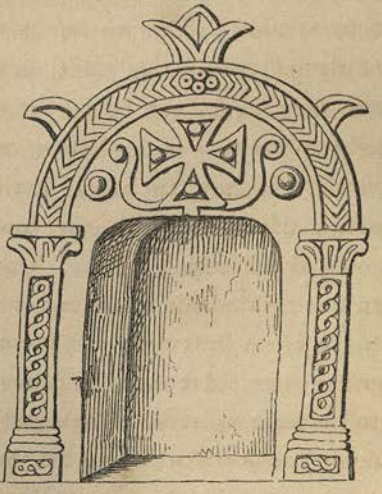
Opposite the desert road we have travelled is a ruined quay, and upon that quay an entrance-gate, constructed during the Roman era, presenting all the features of the triumphal arches at Rome, and elsewhere; having a grand central and two side gates, with arched recesses above. The great hall of the temple beyond has been converted by the early Christians into a church, as have so many others on the Nile. Upon the columns many Greek crosses are cut, in a relieved intaglio, over the gods and

hieroglyphic inscriptions. Fig. 1 is a curious example, in which the cross seems to be conjoined



1 2

with the sacred bread of the Eucharist, and other symbols. Fig. 2 exhibits the more ordinary form



of cross, which occurs repeatedly upon the structure. Against the eastern wall is an altar-table of stone,

with a simple moulding on its upper edge, and a cross, like the examples just given, upon its front. It is now torn from its place and thrown down, —another desecration of another faith. Above it is a recessed arch, of which an engraving is here given, which bears traces of very early character, in the debased forms of Greek ornament mixed with Christian symbols.

These walls, and Philæ generally, have not been spared by mischievous nobodies, anxious to record their visit. The *furore* for inscription, name-painting, and carving, has run riot over the whole of the ruins here to a rabid extent we see nowhere else. Myriads of names crowd the walls, not modestly placed where they might not be very objectionable, but staringly opposing you in letters many inches high, where they destroy the effect of the building. This is particularly the case in the beautiful little temple known as "Pharaoh's Bed." One misguided Scotchman has painted his name and address across the portico, in black letters of portentous size; how he managed to get there to do it is the puzzle, and the risk to his neck must have been great. Perhaps "an accident" in such work might have its wholesome use. Another Scotchman, one B. Mure, has deeply cut his worthless name in large letters upon one of the columns of the great hall, to which some one has

very properly cut a few more, and braced them below it, as a comment—these words are "stultus est," and their double meaning has been richly earned. The inscriptions recording the visit of the investigators sent out by Pope Gregory XVI., and those connected with the French expedition, are too visible also: the amusing vanity of painting up in one place the latitude and longitude of Paris, is peculiarly indicative of a nation that esteems its capital as the only centre of civilisation in the world. A squared panel in the entry of the great pylon, records the visit of the French General Desaix, and his myrmidons, in 1799, or, as it is here termed, "An. 7 de la Republique." The person who cut this upon the walls, has felt so little the true character of his mischievous work, that he "has damned himself to an immortal fame," by placing his name to the labour he ostentatiously parades. The American traveller, Stephens, has placed his above all; to be obliterated in turn by an indignant Frenchman, who has written over it the painted words, "La page de l'histoire ne doit pas être salie." Philæ was the boundary of the French conquests in Egypt; the Memlooks having been pursued beyond the first cataract by the army of Desaix.

The little hypæthral temple on the eastern side of the island, is the most remarkable object upon it;

and the most exquisite in its effect of any in Egypt. It is, and ever has been, open to the sky; the lower part of the walls being mere screens between columns. Its absurd popular name, "Pharaoh's Bed," has become affixed to it by long and general usage. Below it is a quay and a flight of stairs, once the principal approach to the great temples. These are now in a state of confused ruin; the confusion of irregular construction, of additions and adaptation by various builders, at various times, is here also as at Karnac. But a little thoughtful study will make all clear. The sacred chambers where the mystic life and acts of Osiris are portrayed, as well as those relating to the Nile, and the numerous records of the old religion, will well reward investigation. An open colonnade faces the southern point of the island, and from the walled terrace a lovely view of the river, as it flows from the interior of Africa, is obtained. Days may dreamily and profitably pass in Philæ; "idle time not idly spent," where all is so lovely and suggestive.

The ancient Egyptians felt the picturesque charm of Philæ as strongly as they did its sanctity. A curious record exists of the inconvenience and injury done to its priestly denizens thereby. It became a sort of custom for official dignitaries and persons of rank to visit Philæ, as the moderns visit fashionable watering places—to lodge with the priests, and to live

as long as they chose, at their expense. This pretended religious, but really self-indulgent and mean practice, became at last so intolerable, that the priests petitioned the king, Evergetes II., for a royal ordinance to restrain it, which was granted, and the priests at once erected an obelisk, upon which their petition and the reply was inscribed. This obelisk was brought to England by Mr. Bankes; I know not where it is now; it ought to be at Philæ, where it has most interest. In the address to the monarch, he, his wife, and sister, are styled "great gods;" and it is asserted that they, the priests, ran a risk of not having enough, at last, remaining for the customary sacrifices and libations offered for them and their progeny. The royal reply stringently forbids this forced hospitality in future; which appears to have been imposed on them from public functionaries downwards to the soldiers and attendants of their suite.

From the opposite island of Biggeh, the view of Philæ is obtained engraved in Plate XX.; that point of view best displays the walls that once enveloped the island and the group of building within their circuit. A cleft in the wall displays the colonnade of the great fore-court of the temple; the gate-towers, and row of pillars in the great hall are beyond. The small temple called Pharaoh's Bed is seen in advance of this, above the colonnade, on the other side of

F. W. Fairholt, del. et Sc.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

THE ISLAND OF PHILÆ.

the island. There is nothing on this side to clash with the pure antique remains. Philæ here looks its true character, a ruined and deserted fane!

We are now 578 miles above Cairo, reckoning by the winding of the river; and here the tour fittingly and properly ends. Egypt is left and Nubia entered. But, as the wondrous rock-cut temple of Abou-Simboul attracts a few venturous travellers to visit it, who can bear a tedious journey of 273 miles farther, it may be well to briefly note what is to be seen on the way, as well as to add some slight account of what the temple itself is; which undoubtedly deserves to be called a "wonder of the world."

The Nile scenery above Philæ assumes a wilder aspect; granitic rocks abound; the cultivated land is small, and requires great labour to render it productive. "The cliffs, dark red, assume wilder forms, and approach nearer to the river; the stream itself is narrower and more rapid; the line of vegetation is more limited, but brighter, and the desert appears more frequently" (Warburton). "Not only are the villages diminutive,—almost too small to be called hamlets,—but the sprinkling of people between them is so scanty as barely to entitle the country to be called inhabited; but this is clearly from the scarcity of cultivable land" (Miss Martineau). Between Philæ and Dabod the strip on each

side of the river does not average a width of more than a quarter of a mile.

At Dabod, or Wady Dabode, about ten miles above Philæ, the traveller may stop his course for the examination of another ruin. The temple here is of late workmanship, including sculpture of the Roman era, and was never properly completed, some of the columns being left as they were roughly hewn by the quarrymen, a state in which many other temples remain. It was originally surrounded by a wall, and approached from the river by a stone quay, leading to three gates at short distances from each other. There is an excellent view of it in Roberts's great work on Egypt; in which may also be found equally good representations of other Nubian remains seldom visited. Frith's series of photographs also comprise some valuable views. At this spot the scenery of the Nile is very picturesque, but wild. Roberts has delineated its peculiarities, and says of it, "The mountains break into bold forms, the rocks are often precipitous, and islands rise abruptly from the river."

At Wady Kardassy, or Gertassee, are the remains of a beautiful little temple, of which Roberts has given a charming view. Some of the pillars have capitals with the head of Athor, as at Dendera. It is much ruined; and at one period has been con-

verted into a Christian church. Greek inscriptions and crosses still remain upon its walls. It is built in a commanding position on a rock overlooking the river, and around it are extensive quarries in the sandstone, which have been worked by the ancients; the inscriptions upon them are of the Roman era.

Tafa, or Taphis, is a little below Kalabshe. Here are the remains of two small temples, both about thirty feet square within: one is in the centre of the village, the other at its southernmost extremity. It is entirely without interest, as may be judged by Roberts's view. It was once used as a Christian church, and is covered with rude and half-obliterated paintings of saints, and scenes in sacred history. When Wansleb visited this country, in 1673, most of these churches were entire, but closed for want of pastors. Since then they have gradually gone to decay. When Belzoni visited Taphis in 1817, it was used as a stable for cattle. The plain is strewn with the *débris* of buildings, chiefly of the Roman era.

A picturesque fortress, now in ruin, is seen upon a small island between Tafa and Kalabshe, and gives an additional wildness to scenery almost as fantastic and savage as that we contemplated near the first cataract. The river runs here with considerable rapidity, and it is sometimes not easy to land at Tafa or in its neighbourhood.

Kalabshe, a commanding-looking town on the right bank of the river, possesses one of the largest temples in Nubia; but it is of late work and debased art. Its position is striking: "Its noble elevation, the two magnificent terraces by which the entrance is approached, the grand range of mountains by which the scene is backed, the rich groves of palm and acacias in front, and even the mud houses of the population here, add to the striking grandeur of the temple, and the picturesque character of the whole scene." Such is the description given by Brockeden, in "Roberts's Egypt," where may be seen one of the latter artist's finest delineations of Nile scenery and relics. The temple itself has been properly characterised, by Miss Martineau, as "a heap of magnificent ruin; magnificent for vastness and richness, not for taste. The existing building was begun in the reign of Augustus, carried on by some of his successors, and never finished. As it was the largest temple in Nubia, the Christians naturally laid hands on it; and a saint and several halos look out very strangely from among the less barbarous heathen pictures on the walls." Among the numerous inscriptions remaining here is one that may be termed "amusing," by its style of inflated bombast. It is given entire by Wilkinson, and records the doings of a certain Silco, "King of the

Nubadæ, and of all the Ethiopians," who flourished in the time of the late Roman emperors; and was, as he informs us, "a lion to the lower districts, and to the upper a citadel." His great doings in his small district are pompously descanted upon; and he assures all who read this veracious record, "I was not at all behind the other kings, but even before them." The inscription is altogether a valuable illustration of the antiquity of "blowing one's own trumpet!"

About a quarter of a mile distant from this great ruin is a very small, but much more interesting, temple, cut in the face of the rock. It is known as Bayt-el-Welee, or the House of the Saint, having been converted into a home for a hermit of the Mahommedan faith. It simply consists of an entrance hall, of small size, the roof supported by two columns of a similar character to those in the principal tomb at Beni-Hassan, and an inner sanctuary. A triad of gods is sculptured in niches at each end of the hall. The walls have originally been richly decorated with painting, now obscured by dust and damp. Upon the external walls of the area which encloses the entrance, is a series of admirably executed sculptures, of the time of Rameses II., the best period of Egyptian art, recording the victories of that sovereign over the hostile

tribes of Ethiopia and Arabia: they furnish most valuable details of the military costume of the chiefs on both sides; which render this little building, in the opinion of Wilkinson, "next to Abou-Simboul, the most interesting monument in Nubia." Coloured casts have been fortunately made for the National Museum, and may, therefore, be most conveniently studied at home.

The people of Kalabshe are by no means an agreeable race; continually quarrelling among themselves or with their neighbours, and greedy in exactions from strangers. When Belzoni landed here to visit the temple, they gathered in a mass round the entrance to prevent him, unless they were first paid for that privilege. The promise of *backsheesh* after the visit would not satisfy them; an angry altercation ensued, but, as they mustered in a large, determined mass, Belzoni and his attendants prudently retired; when a soldier among them having threatened "that he would remember them," the mob drew their daggers, seized his gun, and a general scuffle took place. While all this was going on at the temple, another group had attacked the boat to rob it, and might have succeeded in doing so, but for the determined courage of Belzoni and his men.

Warburton speaks of these Nubians as bearing "such a character for courage and determination, that

neither tax-gatherer nor conscript-catcher has ever ventured within the walls of the town of Kalabshe." The practice of constantly carrying arms soon gives a serious turn to every dispute; and Nubian men are seldom unarmed; for if not bearing the usual long, light spear, and circular shield, they invariably retain a small knife or dagger, which has a strap, or twisted thong of leather, attached to its sheath, allowing it to be passed round the upper part of the arm, above the elbow, where it is no inconvenience to carry, and always easy to unsheath. The engraving represents one of these daggers, brought by the author from Nubia. The spears are generally provided with very long thin blades, sometimes with extra serrations, and mounted on cane sticks, round which is often wound a thin continuous strip of crocodile skin. Its light and effective character makes the spear a formidable arm, and it may be cast to a great distance with dangerous precision. The shield is circular, and has a hollow boss in the centre, crossed by an iron bar, thus giving the hand a very secure hold; it is generally covered with

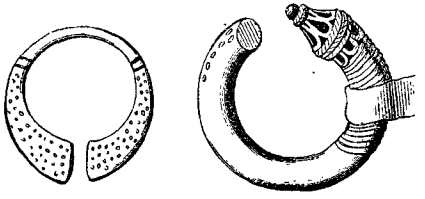
hippopotamus hide. The Nubian men wear very few clothes; sometimes a sort of tunic or shirt, with short wide sleeves, or often without them, is considered "full dress;" more frequently a napkin twisted about the loins is the entire costume. The old men wrap themselves in flowing robes of cotton, and wear turbans; but the hair alone is considered a sufficient head-dress by their juniors, who retain it in a profuse mass, thickly matted with dirt and castor oil. They often have a peculiar mode of arranging the hair in a large tuft on the top of the head, so that it looks like a small upright cap; below this it is left thick and matted, but trimmed at the ends to a straight line with scrupulous precision, as represented in the cut.

Travellers have been generally found to speak enthusiastically of the Nubian women. Warburton thus remarks: "She is more free than her Egyptian neighbour, and also far more virtuous; she seldom wears a veil, and, as she bends over the river to fill her water-jar, or walks away, supporting it with one hand, no statuary could imagine a more graceful picture than she presents. Her light and elegant figure has that serpent sinuousness, when she moves, that constitutes the very poetry of motion, and

resembles gliding rather than walking. Her face is finely oval, and her dark eyes have a gentle and inquiring, though somewhat sad expression, that seems to bespeak great intelligence. Her complexion is very dark, but it is of that bronze colour so familiar to our eyes in statues, that it forms no detraction from the general beauty of this graceful and winning savage." This description, though highly coloured, is in the main correct; it is certain that they are well formed, and have much dignity of bearing. Their features, too, have a massive Greek contour, and their expression is agreeable; but the practice of disfiguring the face by tatooing it, colouring the lips blue, and wearing nose-rings, injures their general effect, which is best studied at a distance, owing to the intolerable fetor of the castor oil with which they soak their hair, and grease their bodies, roughly preparing it themselves by pounding the bean of the plant.

The remarks and cuts on pp. 376—80, make it unnecessary to dwell upon any other peculiarities of Nubian costume, unless it be to notice the increased amount of ornaments, made up from cowrie-shells, generally worn by them; as well as beads, bracelets, &c., from rough silver, and nose-rings occasionally formed from pure gold. By the courtesy of Alfred Denison, Esq. (brother to the Speaker of the House

of Commons), I am enabled to add a very good example of a gold nose-ring he obtained at Kalabshe; it is as flexible as pewter, and decorated with small



indentations; from the same wearer was obtained the larger earring, engraved beside it (both being represented to a scale of one-half the size of the originals); it is of silver, decorated with reeded open-worked ornament at one end, which terminates with a red bead. It is too heavy to hang to the ear, so the lobe of it was inserted in the aperture, and the ring kept in place by a thin strap of leather which passed over the head, another ring in the centre giving a means of securing it there. The woman from whom they were obtained, when with difficulty persuaded to part with them, had to secure the approbation of her heirs-at-law, who had reversionary interest in them (for they pass from mother to daughter, or next relative, and are consequently sometimes of ancient workmanship); and a large group of them

assembled to witness the sale, and take share of the proceeds. When these women become old, they grow withered and ugly, with dry, fleshless skin drawn tightly over the bones, exactly in colour and style of a mummy, the bony legs and arms showing through the coarse dress; nothing but the hideous inventions in a German witch-picture can realise their looks.

We just enter the tropic as we stay to examine the next antique ruin—the temple at Dandour. It is the smallest in Nubia, consisting merely of a portico with two columns in front, two inner chambers, and a sanctuary. It was built during the reign of Augustus Cæsar, by whom it is supposed to have been founded. It stands on the western bank of the Nile, and is protected from the encroachments of the river by a vast mole, forming a platform in front of the pylon—out of character with the insignificance of the temple it preserves. It is not picturesque, nor does it contain any particular feature of interest which need induce the traveller to delay his upward course, should time or the "accident of the hour" make it desirable to proceed.

At Gerf-Hossayn, near Gyrshe, is a rock temple, in depth about 130 feet. The interior bears some resemblance to that at Abou-Simboul, with a row of colossal figures against the pillars, nearly 18 feet

high, but rudely executed. The walls have been covered by hieroglyphics and inscriptions, now much defaced, as the interior is blackened by the fire-smoke raised by the Arabs, who occasionally reside in it. It stands upon a platform excavated from the limestone rock, at a considerable elevation above the plain. A flight of steps, in front, originally led to it from the river. Warburton calls it "the most striking and characteristic spot in Nubia," and the mysterious little rock temple "the strangest, most unearthly place I ever beheld." At Gyrshe, on the opposite bank, are the remains of a similar temple, and many excavations now used as residences for the natives. The Gebel Heyzorba towers above all. The river here is shallow, and fordable in the summer.

Another ten miles of travel accomplished, we then reach Dakké, remarkable as the place where the famous Ethiopian Queen, Candace, was defeated by the Roman army under the command of Petronius. The Temple of Dakké is small but singularly perfect, as may be seen in Roberts's view, who describes it as an exquisite little ruin, both in the execution of its sculptured details and in their preservation. The apartments are not larger than middling-sized English rooms; and such parts as have not been wholly destroyed, present a surface as fine as if the work

were recently finished. In later time, it has been used as a Christian church, and there are traces of some Greek sacred paintings above the pagan symbols: difficult as they are to trace, enough remains to show that, as works of art, they are superior to many of those by the early Greek painters found in the Italian churches.

At Korti, three miles further up the stream, the remains of a temple, consisting merely of a gate, bearing the name of Thothmes III., is seen; about the same distance farther, at Maharakka, is a ruined hypæthral structure, tumbling to decay, and only remarkable for its power of adhesion. The capitals are roughly hewn in blocks, the walls almost destitute of sculpture, and it appears to have never been properly finished. It bears traces, like so many others, of having been used by the early Christians as a place of worship.

An ancient pier will be noticed projecting from the western bank of the stream; it is one of several constructed to protect the alluvial soil from the too rapid action of the water, after the inundation left the higher land for the husbandman's labour. The plan has been adopted by the modern Nubian, who constructs similar rough breakwaters to secure the little land which is so valuable to him.

Saboua, or Wady Saboua, is the next place with

ruins to examine. It is twenty miles from Maharakka. The name of this place literally signifies "the Valley of the Lions," but it is not derived from the haunt of these beasts, but from the long dromos, or avenue of sphinxes, now in a state of mutilation, and supposed by the natives to represent lions. They originally lined a causeway, 180 feet in length, reaching from the river to the temple. Immediately in front of the great gate stood two fine colossal figures 14 feet high, now fallen to the ground; each bears on the left side a tall emblematic staff, surmounted by a ram's head, with the asp and disc. They are beautifully represented, as well as this temple, in Roberts's great work. The temple is built in front of the rocky hill, out of which the adytum is excavated; the inner chambers are now choked with sand, drifted in the course of ages from the arid plain around.

The country here is lonely and wild: the desert encroaches on all sides, and sand usurps the land. On the east bank high sandstone cliffs approach the water. At Korosko the river takes a sudden bend, winding completely round between that place and Ibreem, inconveniencing very frequently the traveller who depends on wind, and delaying the journey in a most uninteresting and unpleasant locality. The thirty miles from Saboua to Deir is a great tax on the patience. A short distance before we reach the

latter place the Temple of Amada, at Hassaia, is visible; it is situated in a picturesque but arid district; it is very small: "a portico, a transverse corridor, and three inner chambers, constitute the whole of this elegant little temple. It is now half buried in sand. The sanctuary is entire, and its walls, as well as those of the two lateral apartments with which it communicates, are covered with small and beautifully executed hieroglyphics, which, though slightly raised, are still sharp, and the colours so remarkably preserved that they might be transferred to paper." Such is the description appended to Roberts's sketch: this temple bears upon it the hieroglyphic names of Egyptian sovereigns from Thothmes III. to Osirtasen III. It has been converted into a Christian church, and is still surmounted by a mud-worked dome. Traces of the ruined Christian town are near.

Less than four miles onward and we reach Deir, the mud-built capital of Nubia. Its dusty hovels are, however, carefully built and well sheltered by palm-trees, which grow with great luxuriance about the place and produce fine fruit. Some of the huts are pleasantly situated in vegetable gardens; and the inhabitants seem to enjoy a savage happiness, as they loiter under trees, amid swarms of naked children. The temple here is in a very ruinous state.

The sculptures commemorate the wars of Rameses the Great, but are much mutilated. Its portico was originally decorated with sixteen pillars: nearly all are now fallen. It has some chambers, and a sanctuary cut in the rock to the depth of 110 feet, with mutilated figures of gods at its farther end.

The river now becomes particularly lonely, and the traveller will seldom encounter another boat. On the western bank are some excavated tombs, with sculptures and painting, calling for no particular notice. After fourteen miles of dull travel the fortress of Ibreem is seen on the eastern bank, occupying a bold headland crested with the ruins of walls, towers, and defences; but it contains few relics of antiquity, and those a mixture of Egyptian and Roman, of a late date and in a bad style. Nothing can be imagined more lonely as an abode than this fortress: the Nile and the sun are the only things that appear to move here; and there is no water except what is obtained from the river. From its elevated situation the look-out is confined to desolate mountains and arid desert; sometimes, but rarely, a boat brings a traveller. Its height above the river is from 200 to 300 feet. It is now totally deserted; but it was in useful order when Ibrahim Pacha was besieged in it by the Memlooks whom he had driven out of Egypt, and

who surrounded this stronghold for many months, intercepting all provisions, until he ultimately obtained aid from Lower Egypt, and drove them still farther south.

Ibreem is celebrated for its date-palms; they produce a fruit of unrivalled quality, very much more luscious in flavour than are to be had elsewhere, of dark colour, and more like a rich preserve than a naturally grown fruit. They are much valued by connoisseurs, and fetch large prices.

Thirty-four more miles of wild and lonely river, and the traveller reaches the world-renowned, rock-cut temples of Abou-Simboul. The arid rocks near it take the most fantastic forms, unlike those about Philæ, but having the same weird-like, ruined look, as if broken from the mainland in an awful natural convulsion. One is pyramidal, others cliff-like, coming forward in great masses from the main strata. At Abou-Simboul, the almost perpendicular rock shows sections of its strata over the entire surface. Nearest the Nile is one of the two temples that have given celebrity to this locality. This is the smaller, and was first known. Like the larger, it is cut into the face of the rock, having six figures on its front, each measuring 6½ feet in height to their knees only, and 30 feet entirely. The larger temple is separated from it by a cleft in the rock,

almost perpendicular, which had made a sort of sloping avenue, down which the sand had fallen, until the entrance to this noble temple, and the colossi at its gate, had become obscured. It remained for the celebrated traveller Burckhardt to discover, when he visited Nubia in 1813. He had inspected the smaller temple by the river, when, on ascending this cleft, "having, luckily, turned more to the southward, I fell in with what is still visible of four immense colossal statues cut out of the rock, at a distance of about 200 yards from the temple. They are now almost entirely buried in the sand: could the sand be cleared away, I suspect a vast temple would be discovered." Upon his return to Cairo he made Belzoni acquainted with this, who enthusiastically prepared to excavate it in 1816, when he first visited it; but the difficulties he had to contend against were the idleness of the people, and their total ignorance of the value of the money he offered them. After much weary parleying, he returned northward, and the following year was joined at Philæ by Captains Irby and Mangles, with whom he returned to Abou-Simboul, and effectually exhumed the temple. Belzoni's enthusiastic pages must be consulted for a lengthened and interesting narrative of the work.

The façade of this grand sanctuary is formed by

cutting the base of the vertical rock into the necessary shape; its slight projection allowing the formation of four colossal figures in complete relief, as if seated and resting against it. So enormous are their proportions that the forefinger of each is three feet in length, the entire height being about sixty-six feet. In the Crystal Palace, at Sydenham, are copies, the full size, of two of these figures; and from them an idea may be formed of the general character of the originals. One is quite perfect; the second has been broken as far as the knee; the third is buried in sand to the waist; and of the fourth, the bust is alone visible. The entrance gate is between the two central figures, and is surmounted by a statue of the god Re, or the Sun, to whom the temple was dedicated by Rameses II., who is represented in the act of sacrificing to him. Above all is a frieze, with monkeys sculptured in it: the entire height of the façade is a hundred feet.

"A vast and gloomy hall," says Warburton, "receives you in passing from the flaming sunshine into that shadowy portal. It is some time before the eye can ascertain its dimensions through the imposing gloom; but gradually there reveals itself, around and above you, a vast aisle, with pillars formed of eight colossal giants, upon whom the light of heaven has never shone. These images of Osiris are backed

by enormous pillars, behind which run two great galleries, and in these torchlight alone enables us to peruse a series of sculptures in relief, representing the triumphs of Rameses II., or Sesostris. The painting which once enhanced the effect of these spirited representations, is not dimmed, but crumbled away; where it exists the colours are as vivid as ever.

"This unequalled hall is one hundred feet in length; and from it eight lesser chambers, all sculptured, open to the right and left. Straight on, is a low doorway, opening into a second hall of similar height, supported by four square pillars; and within all, is the adytum, wherein stands a simple altar of the living rock in front of four large figures seated on rocky thrones. This inner shrine is hewn at least one hundred yards into the rock; and here, in the silent depths of that great mountain, these awful idols, with their mysterious altar of human sacrifice, looked very pre-Adamitic and imposing. They seemed to sit there waiting for some great summons which should awaken and reanimate these 'kings of the earth.'"

Few travellers will venture another dreary forty miles beyond this to the second cataract, there being nothing but a few excavated tombs and small temples on the way. At Wady Halfeh (literally the valley of desert grass), within five miles of the cataract,

are slight remains of early buildings. The cataract is a succession of rapids extending over some miles, but possessing less remarkable features than those we have contemplated at Philæ.

Thebes, Edfou, or Philæ are admirable terminations to a Nile voyage, and may be chosen at a traveller's convenience; but the peculiarities of Abou-Simboul, its grandeur and its colossal sculpture, leave it without a rival as an example of the noble art of the most remarkable nation of the ancient world.

CHAPTER XII.

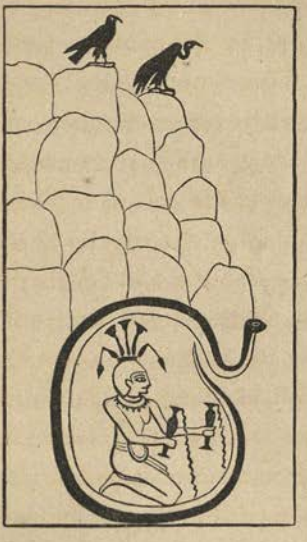
THE NILE IN ITS SACRED AND SANATORY ASPECT.—THE RETURN VOYAGE.

EGYPT is in every way the most remarkable nation of antiquity. Hence no place possesses greater interest for the mind of the philosophic inquirer than the Valley of the Nile. Hemmed in by the arid mountains which confine it on one side from the Arabian, and on the other from the African desert, watered by a river whose marvellous natural phenomena gave it a sacred character to the men of antiquity, it was here that the arts of civilisation developed themselves at so early an era, that we are sometimes compelled to allow priority of invention to them, when we had imagined many so-called discoveries belonged exclusively to modern time. Here, too, the earliest traces of religion, and an established priesthood, are to be found,—irrespective of that given in the books of Moses, himself educated in the land, and skilled

in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Notwithstanding the existence of much that is grotesque to our eyes in the pictured forms of their pantheon, it is clear to such as will properly study them, and the living creatures consecrated to the deities, that they looked "through nature up to nature's God" in the whole scheme of their theology. Thus many living things were sacred from their presumed typification of the greater phenomena of nature, as we have had occasion briefly to show in our notes on the apis, ibis, cat, crocodile, &c.; and which are more fully descanted on by the band of authors who have devoted themselves to Egyptian theology. The Nile, in the opinion of the ancients, was a constantly recurring miraculous proof of the power and benignity of the great god Osiris, and inasmuch as they depended upon the annual inundation for the welfare, for, indeed, the very existence of the country, the stream was sacred in their eyes, and was represented as a god in their pictorial pantheon. He is usually depicted in human form, his head surmounted by a group of water-plants in bud and flower, apparently the lotus, once so common, now so rare, upon the stream. He is generally shown as if in "good condition"—a stout, well-filled figure, befitting the god who is the realisation of one who fertilises "the fat meads" of Egypt. The tint of his flesh is highly-coloured, as some

think, to indicate the rich nature of the soil; and occasionally we find the Nile in a duplex form, with two figures precisely similar, the one coloured red, the other blue, probably intended to delineate the two great branches of the stream, now known as the *white* and *blue* rivers, forming their junction at Khartoum; or, in the opinion of other writers, they may typify Upper and Lower Egypt; or, possibly, the eastern and western banks of the Nile. These two figures are generally represented as we see them on the thrones of the colossi at Thebes, face to face, engaged in binding the royal seat with river-plants, typical of the stability and fertility thus ensured to the kingdom. In the Great Temple of Luxor, Nilus is delineated as the guardian and protector of the royal children. When alone, he is usually accompanied by fruits and flowers; his costume simply consists of a broad decorative collar, and a girdle from which three bands depend in front. By far the most curious emblematic representation of the god occurs in the sacred chamber at Philæ, where his mystic history is depicted, and his rites were anciently performed. From this the engraving on the following page is copied. The deity of the river is kneeling, and pouring a double stream from two vases held in his hands. The mystic serpent surrounds and protects him at the foot of his rocky abode. On the summit

of these cliffs, stand a hawk and a vulture; it would not perhaps be possible more clearly and ingeniously to typify the river in its sacred and mundane character.



The Greeks and, more particularly, the Romans, with the easy facility which characterised their creed, and led them to see in the gods of other nations varieties of their own, or new emanations easily embraced in their cycle of the deities, willingly accorded the place of honour given to Nilus by the Egyptians; hence he

appeared on the Roman coinage upon an equality with their own Tiber, and other river gods; but his form takes, of course, that less conventional one, suitable to the refined freedom which characterised Roman art. After the Emperor Hadrian had visited Egypt (about A.D. 130), he commemorated the journey upon the coins he issued, and Nilus appears upon several of them. He is personified as of middle age, with flowing beard, the lower part of his muscular form covered by ample drapery, gathered over the right arm. He is seen to most advantage upon the reverse of a gold coin, as finely executed as any gem; a copy of it adorns our title-page. Here Nilus reposes, with his left arm on a sphinx; he bears a cornucopiæ in the right, and a flowering rush in the left hand; the former filled with corn and fruit, typical of the fertility of the stream which flows at his feet, and in which we see a crocodile; a hippopotamus has just left the water, and is retiring in the background. It would be impossible to conceive a more apt and beautiful illustration of the peculiarities of the river. The contrast between the earlier Egyptian allegory and this is perfect, yet each is equally happy in typifying the stream. In the museum of the capitol at Rome is a famed colossal figure of Nilus, which was found in the Colonna gardens, and is attributed to the time of the Antonines. It

resembles the figure on the coins, but is surrounded by sixteen children, typical of the number of Roman palms the river reached, in extra height, during the annual inundation.

Irrespective of its sacred character, the river was valued by the men of antiquity for its sanatory properties, an opinion still held by the modern Egyptians, as noted in p. 114. "What? do you crave for wine when you have the Nile to drink from?" was the indignant query of Pescennius Niger to his dissatisfied soldiers during his Egyptian campaign. Sandys gives his experience of the belief, in the quaint words:—"Than the waters thereof there is none more sweet; being not unpleasantly cold, and of all others the most wholesome. So much it nourisheth as that the inhabitants think that it forthwith converteth into blood; retaining that property ever since thereinto metamorphosed by Moses. For which cause the priests of Isis would not permit their Apis to drink of the same; because they would neither have him nor themselves too fat and corpulent, that the soul might the better exercise her faculties, being clothed in a light and delicate body."

The great fertility of Egypt has always been celebrated; and the rich deposit of mud annually brought down the stream during the inundation, is

unrivalled for agricultural uses. Its component parts have been thus analysed by Regnault, in the "Mémoires sur l'Egypte:"—

11	water
9	carbon
6	oxide of iron
4	silica
4	carbonate of magnesia
18	carbonate of lime
48	alumen
100	

Wilkinson observes that "the fertilising properties of the alluvial deposit answer all the purposes of the richest manure. Its peculiar quality is not merely indicated by its effects, but by the appearance it presents; and so tenacious and siliceous is its structure, that when left upon rocks and dried by the sun, it resembles pottery, from its brittleness and consistence." The great heat of the sun splits the banks of the stream into deep fissures; these banks, when the stream is low, are ten or twelve feet in height, a solid wall of mud, but each year's deposit may be clearly detected in any section thus formed, in the same way that we may determine the age of a tree by the concentric rings visible in its stem; for it is a curious fact that this liquid mud does not amalgamate with the previous deposit, although that be softened by the overflow of the stream, but may

be separated in layers, generally about one-eighth of an inch in thickness, with perfect ease, the upper and under surface of each being as flat as a sheet of cardboard. Viewed under a powerful microscope the component parts of this fertile deposit present a singularly interesting epitome of the course of the stream—fragments of syenite, basalt, and other rocks, indicating its passage from the interior of Africa to the sea.

Of late years the Nile has been the favoured resort of invalids, whose transit has been rendered easy by the extraordinary facilities offered by steam-boats and railway, all under European control. English medical men have greatly favoured this new influx of travellers; and many a Nile boat may now be looked upon as a floating sanatorium. On this subject we must now speak.

The report of the twentieth meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Edinburgh, 1850, contains a paper by T. Spencer Wells, F.R.C.S., on the climate of the valley of the Nile, compiled from notes taken during a journey made between Cairo and Thebes, from December 6th, 1849, to March 6th, 1850; and in order to judge of the advantage to be gained by an English invalid passing the winter in Egypt, he draws the following comparison between that country and England:—

"The mean temperature of the air during this period of observations at Greenwich was 39° 3′; on the Nile it was 61°.

"The mean temperature of evaporation at Greenwich was 37° 4′; in Egypt 55°.

"The mean temperature of the dew point at Greenwich was 34° 1′; in Egypt 50° 8′.

"The mean elastic force of vapour in Egypt was 0·384; at Greenwich 0·214.

"The mean weight of water in a cubic foot of air in England was 3 grains; in Egypt $4\frac{3}{10}$ grains; but still, owing to the higher temperature, the air was much drier in Egypt. At Greenwich the mean additional weight of water required to saturate a cubic foot of air was only $\frac{1}{4}$ of a grain, while on the Nile it was $1\frac{3}{4}$ grain. If we represent air completely deprived of moisture by zero, and air completely saturated as unity, the mean degree of humidity on the Nile was 75 per cent., while at Greenwich it was 85 per cent.

"The average weight of a cubic foot of air at Greenwich was 549 grains; in Egypt 527 grains.

"Rain fell in various districts of England on averages from thirty-one to sixty-one days; while in Egypt it only fell on five days, and on three of these a shower was of but a few minutes duration. On two days rain fell heavily at Cairo for several hours.

"The mean daily range of the temperature of the air at Greenwich was 11·37; in Egypt 10·31; but while the mean extreme range in Egypt was 38, at Greenwich it was but 29; the mean extreme range in the cabin being only 7° below that on the grass at Greenwich in the open air.

"Fog was occasionally but rarely observed. It was general in the Delta, in the early morning; but above Cairo it was only observed on three occasions."

To the above facts I may now add my own experiences. My notes of temperature were taken during the month of January, 1861; and, like those of Mr. Wells, in an unusually cold season. We had very heavy rain at Cairo on the night of the 1st of January, and the thermometer was as low as 52° (Fahrenheit); thick fogs were on the river in the morning, and we did not escape them till we got beyond Minieh. I kept the following record from the 7th of January, noting by the same ordinary thermometer, the changes of temperature between morning, noon, and evening:—

	8 a.m.	Noon.	Sunset.
Jan. 8	53°	85°	65°
„ 9	49	98	67
„ 10	76	70	70
„ 11	62	105	68
„ 12	61	100	66

The above was obtained by means of a thermometer hung *outside* the cabin door. The following was the temperature *inside* the saloon, beginning from the two hot days last noted :—

	8 a.m.	Noon.	Sunset.
Jan. 13	45°	68°	62°
„ 14	50	60	65
„ 15	50	64	67
„ 16	51	61	64
„ 17	50	69	67
„ 18	54	65	62
„ 19	48	63	55
„ 20	53	64	66
„ 21	55	65	65
„ 22	55	67	62

Midnight or early morning was accompanied by a cold, felt the more intensely by the contrast with the midday heat. Indeed, the changes were constant every four or five hours, and forcibly brought to mind the old complaint of the patriarch Jacob to Laban :—"By day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night." The boats have no accommodation for artificial heat; and the intense cold, which will often wake an invalid in the night, can only be mitigated by throwing on extra covering. The doors and windows of the cabins generally fit badly, and thorough drafts of cold air abound on all sides; this is as much the result of the warping of the wood, as of the original clumsy carpentry. As a rule it

becomes necessary to take winter as well as summer clothing for the journey; and to add some of the former to the latter after sunset. The temperature was seldom comfortable before eleven in the morning, but after that hour it rapidly increased. Within the tropic the same cold was severely felt at night during December and January; and some travellers who had come in an open boat from Dongola, had suffered much therefrom.

When the traveller leaves Cairo, he must be in a great degree self-reliant, taking in his boat the chief articles of necessity or comfort he may require on his voyage; and, should he be an invalid, remembering that no medical aid and no medicine can by any possibility be obtained on his journey, except by the chance of what other boats, with European travellers, may supply. This, in itself, is no pleasant prospect to an invalid; and as consumptive or lung complaints are those most usually sent here for cure, it would seem as if European doctors founded their judgment chiefly on the mild temperature of the Egyptian day, without taking into account the severe cold of the night. To send a delicate invalid up the river in a drafty boat, away from all medical aid, seems like a condemnation to death. A residence in Cairo, or any town where the balmy day and evening might be enjoyed, and the cold of night

avoided, or mitigated by firing and home comforts, seems to be the more sensible proceeding; and in this view of the case I am strengthened as well by my own experience, as by that of a clever European doctor resident in Cairo, who assured me that one of his least agreeable tasks was to write to England, and advise patients not to be sent out, who were consigned to the East by their physicians.

Let the invalid's position be fairly and clearly stated thus:—He will suffer greater alternations of temperature, and more frequently, than any he will meet with in Europe; he will want the good food and comforts of an English home; and he will be subject to insect annoyances, particularly "the plague of flies," to an extent of which he can have no previous experience. On the other hand he will be enabled to depend on an almost uninterrupted sunshine; on days of dreamy pleasantness, as he floats on the shining river, closed by sunsets of a gorgeous loveliness, that surpass the painted glories of our most ethereal landscape-painter Turner; succeeded by night, when moon and stars shine out with a brilliancy we never witness at home.

Bidding farewell to the Nubians, let us imagine ourselves again at Assouan, prepared for a start toward Cairo.

The return voyage consists of little else than drifting down the stream with the current, which runs rapidly. The only delay is occasioned by adverse winds, which render the heavy shallow *dahabeah* unmanageable. In descending the river the large sails are closely reefed, and slung midships, forming convenient central poles to support an awning when it is required. In order that the slightest impediment to the free course of the boat be avoided, the cooking stove at the head of the vessel is deprived of its sides and roof; and an open fireplace gives the cook much trouble when the wind is high. The sailors take the world easier than ever, lying about smoking, chewing sugar-cane, or sitting in a circle listening to an old song from one of the crew, clapping hands to time, and joining in its monotonous chorus. If the wind be favourable, nothing can be more enjoyable than this easy "scudding under bare poles;" if it be against you strongly, there is nothing for it but to anchor and wait for a change. Three days is the general duration of the strongest hurricane, but one day's delay is usually sufficient, for, if not too violent, the sailors row or tack from side to side of the river, the boat often turning completely round. Good pilotage is now the most important faculty to bring in requisition, or the boat may suddenly and violently ground

on the sandbanks that occur so constantly beneath the shallow stream.

All the crew make a point of trading on each voyage, and unless the traveller be very firm he will find his boat look more like a luggage barge than a pleasure boat, from the quantity of crates containing common pottery, boxes of oranges, and a variety of articles, upon which profit may be made, in bringing them from the place of their manufacture or growth, to Cairo. The water bottles, for instance, realise cent. per cent.; and every sailor scrapes what cash he can together, to obtain in this way an additional advantage to himself. Dragomen and captain have generally no mercy on available space; and as the former class have plenty of money at command, they load a boat with merchandise, and will even bully timid travellers by asserting, with much vehemence and simulated feeling of injustice done them, that it is "the custom" to allow all this. Unless a determined opposition be made, they will "try it on," until the traveller will find his own luggage "cleared out" of the hold, that their own may have safe shelter; thus a friend of the author's found his guns and ammunition placed on the cabin roof, to make room for his dragoman's private purchases.

As a rule, firmness in establishing and enforcing due discipline in the boat, is absolutely necessary;

its honest assertion is never attended with other than proper results.

Many of the scenes already familiar to the voyager will be seen from new points of view on his return; and some improved thereby. The rocky defile of Silsilis and the approach to Thebes are both better seen in descending the river. The part most trying to the patience, as the long voyage approaches its termination, is between Benisouef and Cairo, where the dull, flat monotony of the river becomes almost insupportable. The grand mass of the False Pyramid at Zaytoun is gladly welcomed as a feature which tells of a near approach to the Egyptian capital; the sailors, too, become more active under the excitement of a visit home, or to the coffee-shops of Boulak. On our return one of the crew dressed himself after a most grotesque fashion, making a hood of a sheepskin, with the tail erected over his forehead, enacting a wild figure-dance somewhat after the style of a North American Indian, at the same time loudly beating a drum; all his antics being intended to divert the evil-eye to himself, and so prevent its influence on the boat and its crew, which might give an unlucky close to the voyage.

It will be well for the traveller to terminate his journey early in March, and thus avoid the Khamseen wind, which is most injurious to the lungs,

and depressing to the system generally. From the beginning of November to the middle of March is the most favourable time for a Nile voyage.

Returned to Alexandria, the traveller will there have abundant opportunities of "taking the chance" of many agreeable visits to remarkable places, if time and inclination serve. Ships are constantly going to Constantinople. Steamers go to Jaffa, and from thence an overland journey of thirty hours places the stranger in Jerusalem. The Austrian Lloyds' steamers (the best after the Peninsular boats) run from Alexandria to Trieste, and the voyage is described as most agreeable; this will give the traveller the opportunity of seeing Venice, visiting Vienna, or any of the principal capital cities of central Europe. Those who desire a direct voyage home, may ensure it in the Peninsular boats, which leave Alexandria about the 5th, 11th, 19th, and 27th of each month. Those who prefer the shorter sea voyage, by the Gulf of Lyons to Marseilles, may also take places at Alexandria or Malta, by the same company's steamers, which also go that journey; or should they desire short and leisurely trips by sea, the French boats of the "Messageries Impériale," have every comfort and convenience, and either go direct from Malta to Marseilles, or take a coasting voyage of Italy to that port. Starting in the after-

noon of one day, they rest the following morning at Messina; leaving there in the afternoon, they enter the bay of Naples early next morning; leaving that again the same evening, they rest next day in the harbour of Civita Vecchia; departing thence about 4 p.m., they reach Leghorn at 8 next morning; and leaving Leghorn in the afternoon, they arrive at Marseilles before the next midday. Though the rate of passage in these boats is decidedly dear—including full hotel charges for every meal, very many never being eaten—they are, however, comfortably and even luxuriously furnished, and the table and attendance good; the wines, as usual at all continental *tables d' hôte*, execrable, except when ordered and paid for as an extra. The traveller should avoid the Italian boats, which are generally as dear, but dirty and uncomfortable, with extortionate and bad attendance.

By adopting the use of these French coasting boats, the journey to Marseilles may be made easy and agreeable. A day is generally enough to see the ports they stop at; but should the traveller wish to stop longer, he will find abundant to repay him at all of them. Naples—with its historic bays and islands,—Pompeii, Herculaneum, and the Museo Borbonico, the famed collection of relics exhumed from them, may well occupy all his leisure. From Civita

Vecchia a run by railway will place the traveller in Rome after a three hours' transit. From Leghorn in an hour he may reach Pisa, and in two hours more Florence, by a cheap and commodious railway running through a lovely country. From Marseilles the direct line of rail leads by Arles, Nismes, and Orange to Lyons, embracing picturesque views of the glorious Rhone, and the noble antiquities of these ancient towns,—second only in interest to Rome itself. From Lyons to Dijon and Paris, and from thence to London, the facilities for quick travel are perfect.

Abundant choice, therefore, lies open to the traveller who may desire either to return quickly or leisurely HOME—to the one loved locality, where

> "In the world's volume
> Our Britain seems as of it, but not in it;
> In a great pool, a swan's nest."

THE END.

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